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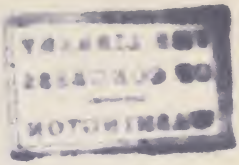

THE

# WESLEYAN DEMOSTHENES:

COMPRISING

## SELECT SERMONS

OF

## REV. JOSEPH BEAUMONT.

With a Sketch of his Character.

By REV. J. B. WAKELEY, D.D.

"His words bore sterling weight, nervous and strong,
In manly tides of strength they rolled along.

17
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# SKETCH

OF

# REV. JOSEPH BEAUMONT, M.D.

THE

# WESLEYAN DEMOSTHENES.

## REV. JOSEPH BEAUMONT, M.D.

English Methodism has produced a number of eminent public orators, stars of the first magnitude in the ecclesiastical heavens:

> "Immortal names,
> That were not born to die."

Among the most gifted of these was the Rev. Dr. Joseph Beaumont. His character had a tinge of chivalry, and his life was full of movement. He was, indeed, more like a comet than a planet, for he moved in his own eccentric orbit, leaving behind him a brilliant light. Of the mighty men of Wesleyan Methodism none were more attractive and powerful in the pulpit than he. He swayed the masses as the wind sways the waving grain or the leaves on the trees. Often, by a burst of his eloquence, he would raise a whole audience from their seats, and they would lean forward and listen to him with rapt attention. His fame as a pulpit orator, now confined somewhat to his native land, richly deserves to be extended over the Christian world.

### Beaumont's Early Years.

Joseph Beaumont was born at Castle Donnington, March 19, 1794. His father, John Beaumont, was a Methodist preacher, and was distinguished, among other traits of character, for his love of music and of fine horses. He not only loved music, but he composed many beautiful tunes, which, though not equal to those of Haydn or Handel, were much admired. Some of them are still sung.

Joseph's mother was a charming woman, who did much in molding his character and shaping his destiny. He tenderly loved her in life, and deeply lamented her in death. Annually he visited her grave and wept there. Behold how he loved her! How the orator fades away before the affectionate son! Joseph inherited from his father an ardent love for music. It grew with his growth, and strengthened with his strength, and ripened with his riper years, so that he could have sung,

> "Let music cheer me last on earth,
> And greet me first in heaven."

### Early Seriousness.

Young Beaumont says: "No sooner did reason begin to dawn than my mind was impressed with a consciousness of a Divine Being. Serious impressions were early made; and I remember perfectly well at Birstall, when about seven years old, I felt much under sermons, and when the congregations were singing. There was a general alarm among the young people there at that time, so that we

held a prayer-meeting on a Sunday afternoon in a summer-house in my father's garden. O the simplicity of our hearts! Would to God I had now that childlike humility! Singing was what most affected me—more than the sermon. When funeral hymns were sung, and especially when one particular hymn was sung, I could never refrain from crying, whether in chapel or meeting."*

### At Kingswood School.

At the age of nine years Joseph was sent to the famous school at Kingswood, where the sons of Methodist preachers were educated. These were among his brightest days, and Kingswood had a charm for him throughout all his life. He looked back upon it as his Alma Mater. Years after he wrote thus: "Kingswood, where art thou? Kingswood school, still dearer, art thou fled forever?"

### Poetic Tendencies.

Joseph early sought the Muses; but was cured in rather a strange way, at Kingswood, of his poetic tendencies. Each boy was directed to furnish an original poem as a competitive exercise. There was a great strife among them, each contending for the palm. Young Beaumont wrote an effusion that was much admired, and it was generally admitted it deserved the highest honor; but just as he expected to be crowned with laurels one of the masters thought it was not *original*, and that the young would-be

* Autobiography, which he wrote when fifteen years old.

poet had attempted to shine in borrowed feathers. The master was mistaken, but the disappointment quenched Joseph's poetic fire. Late in life he said, "I always thought it a happy circumstance that this trivial event occurred, as it had the effect of leading me to abandon all attempts at nibbling at the foot of Parnassus—the elevation of which I should never have reached."

### Beaumont's Conversion.

He had reason to remember Kingswood, for it was his spiritual birthplace. There was a revival of religion at Kingswood a year before Joseph left the school, and he was one of the converts. With a glad heart he said to his brother Thomas, who was also a pupil in that school, "*Christ has pardoned my sins.*" A new religious class was formed, and Joseph was appointed leader.

At Kingswood he distinguished himself for morality, industry, unbounded thirst for knowledge, and for success in scholarship. He returned home from Kingswood after an absence of five years. He remained at home only five days, and then took his departure to enter upon business life.

### His Apprenticeship.

Greatly disappointed was Joseph when his stern father bound him an apprentice to a chemist at Macclesfield. The business was not at all congenial to his taste, but, like a dutiful son, he yielded obedience. His master failing in business, Joseph went to a better place at Chesterfield. Here, while

faithful in attendance to his lawful business, he neglected not to cultivate his intellectual and moral powers.

### Call to the Ministry—Singular Opposition.

Joseph finally determined to become a Methodist preacher, though some friends wished him to become a minister of the Church of England. Strange to say, he met with opposition to his design of becoming a traveling preacher from a source he least expected—from his father, who sent Joseph the following letter, dated January, 1813: "There are several things that will make against the ministry for you. *First*, your stammering. This, I fear, cannot be conquered so as to make you an agreeable public speaker, and allow that acuteness of expression and ready elocution which are so pleasing. *Secondly*, your state of health will not admit of the physical and mental exertion which is necessary for a zealous minister. *Thirdly*, as things now stand in the religious world, men with small abilities are but little thought of. In fact, I think no one should be a minister but those who dare not resist the call of God." Was a cooler or more discouraging letter ever written by a father? We should have thought it would have damped Joseph's ardor, extinguished his fire, annihilated his call, and taken all the preach out of him. How surprising that letter reads when we think of the splendid genius, wonderful gifts, oratorical powers, and the brilliant career of the writer's distinguished son!

### Impediment in his Speech.

An erroneous impression has extensively prevailed that the roof of Dr. Beaumont's mouth was defective, and that he was obliged to have a silver one inserted to enable him to speak. This is a mistake. In his autobiography he speaks of "an impediment in my speech, which it has pleased Almighty Goodness to afflict me with." In early life it was a source of great annoyance to him, but he struggled like Demosthenes, and succeeded, in a great measure, in overcoming it. It was purely a nervous affection, which was removed by placing himself under the care of eminent elocutionists, and by presence of mind, attention, and self-control.

### Bunting's Advice.

In regard to young Beaumont entering the ministry his father consulted Dr. Jabez Bunting, and as he favored it that decided the question. This is noteworthy, when we remember the attitude Drs. Bunting and Beaumont assumed toward each other in after years, being constantly opposed in regard to Church policy. They were both highly gifted men, but dissimilar in their views, tastes, and actions. Dr. Bunting never had a sharper thorn in his side than Joseph Beaumont; and Dr. Beaumont never met with a sterner or more powerful opposition in the Wesleyan body than from Jabez Bunting.

### Beaumont's First Sermon.

"At the age of nineteen," says Dr. Beaumont, "I delivered my first sermon, in compliance with the earnest entreaty of my minister and the irresistible persuasion of my mind that such was my duty, from 'Repent ye, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out,' etc. I was accompanied to the chapel by the superintendent preacher, who sat behind me in the pulpit. That trial was decisive, and I was assured by my friends and minister, and others with whom I was associated, that I must henceforth leave all and follow Christ in the great vocation of the Christian ministry." How wise it was to have the question settled then, there, and forever! It saved much future anxiety.

### He Enters the Traveling Connection.

At the Conference of 1813, when Beaumont was only nineteen years old, he was brought forward by Rev. Robert Crowther, and entered upon the regular work of the ministry. He began his labor with a due sense of his responsibility.

### First and Second Circuits—Results.

On his first circuit, Warrington, he was highly esteemed, and heaven crowned his labors with success. Among others converted under his ministry was Rev. R. Moffatt, the distinguished South African missionary. Young Beaumont while on that circuit wrote to a friend thus: "Pulpit work

is my increasing delight. In my study and in the pulpit I find my most happy and exalted moments, and what I feel in the one is generally apparent in the other. My heart's desire and chiefest ambition is, to become an able minister of the New Testament, that I may save both myself and them that hear me." These were noble sentiments from a young minister.

His next appointment (1815) was Prescott. Two important events that exerted great influence on his future destiny transpired here. The first was, the forming the acquaintance of Dr. Adam Clarke, the eminent biblical scholar and commentator, who resided on the circuit. A friendship was here commenced between them that was interrupted only by death, to be renewed on the other side of the river, where

> "Perfect love and friendship reign
> To all eternity."

The second event referred to was his introduction to Miss Morton, a lady who afterward became Mrs. Joseph Beaumont. Beaumont and Dr. Robert Morrison, the distinguished missionary to China, married sisters. From this field of labor Mr. Beaumont wrote to a friend thus: "Of late my views have become enlarged of the vast responsibility of the ministerial position, of the high and varied qualifications necessary to a proper discharge of its functions, and my soul pants with warmer desires than usual that success and prosperity may crown my feeble endeavors. To be a wise, an

able, a faithful, and successful minister of the New Testament, O how vast the thought! how august the character! how high the calling! how arduous the task, how solemn the duties! how rich, how vast, how glorious the reward! Such is the very height of my ambition; but what an immense distance there is between me and such a character." What correct views he had of the sacred office and of his own tremendous responsibility! During these years he studied as intensely as the mind could bear to show himself "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

### Glasgow—Dr. Chalmers—His Lectures.

In 1819 he was appointed to Glasgow, Scotland. He concluded to make the best of it, as that was the seed-time of his life. He went to hear Dr. Thomas Chalmers deliver the introductory to a course of lectures on the Romans. "He was said to be below himself on that occasion. However much or little he was *below himself*, he was a good way *above his audience.* He is quite *sui generis;* having a class of thought peculiar to himself—novel, original, and bold—and a class of phrase as peculiar as his thought. He is in the best and highest sense of the word a *great man*, and to me seems *destined to be a burning* and a shining light." How descriptive of the character of Chalmers, who had not yet reached his zenith! How prophetic! It showed that young Beaumont was a discerner of men, and could appreciate superior talents.

About this time he wrote, "I am at present attending the logic and the rhetoric class, and so far have turned collegian without either intention or prospect of literary honors." These lectures were of great benefit to him.

Being an unmarried man he remained in Glasgow only one year, being removed at the ensuing Conference to Dunbar Circuit. During the year 1821 he was married to Miss Morton, who made him an excellent wife, and became the mother of a number of children, whom he used to call "a flock."

### Edinburgh.

His next appointment was Edinburgh, where he lived three years. He there enrolled himself a member of the University, as he had done in Glasgow; and though he attended the lectures of Dr. Chalmers and others, his studies were not now, as formerly, directed to *belles-lettres* or moral science, but to the acquisition of the physical sciences. It was a favorite maxim with Dr. Beaumont that *all knowledge is worth acquiring.* His ministry at Edinburgh was one of great success. He was so unboundedly popular that the people made an effort to have him remain the fourth year, which was inconsistent with the Wesleyan order. From Edinburgh he was sent to Buxton Circuit, in England.

### Hull Circuit—William M. Bunting.

Dr. Beaumont removed from Buxton Circuit to Hull. Here he had a more enlarged sphere of labor, and here he acquired great reputation and

influence among the Wesleyans. Neither was his reputation restricted to them. The years at Hull may be looked upon as the opening period of his general popularity throughout the country; they were years in which his position and powers were matured and his reputation established.

Dr. Beaumont not only preached to crowds of admiring auditors at Hull, but his services began to be in demand all over the country on special occasions, dedicating chapels, and at missionary and Bible meetings. A missionary meeting was held at Hull, and Dr. Beaumont preached one of his characteristic sermons. The next evening the Rev. William M. Bunting preached a missionary discourse which greatly pleased Dr. Beaumont, and he thus wrote concerning it: "I have seen no young man in our Connection of whom I think so highly as of this said William M. Bunting. He preached a delightful sermon; rich, solemn, earnest, and impressive. His piety seems sincere, modest, and pervading, and when I saw the grace of God in him I was glad." What an honorable record! It showed there was no jealousy in his bosom. Dr. Beaumont suffered greatly at Hull from heart disease. He left that place, loving and being beloved, and was appointed to Nottingham Circuit.

### London—James Parsons—Death of Dr. Clarke.

From Nottingham Circuit Dr. Beaumont was sent to Southwark, London, where he spent three years. His ministry in London produced quite a sensation, and was a grand success.

In October, 1831, he heard Rev. James Parsons preach, and was greatly delighted. He says: "I made my way to Tottenham Court Chapel, where James Parsons was valiantly holding forth on being 'valiant for the truth.' The crowd was prodigious; many hundreds went away unable to press in." Mr. Parsons was a magnificent preacher, and the sermon Dr. Beaumont then heard was published in the "Pulpit" years ago. I read it with great delight. In August, 1832, Dr. Adam Clarke died suddenly, with the cholera, and among others Dr. Beaumont preached a very able and appropriate sermon in reference to him. Most deeply he lamented the Doctor's death; and we wonder not, for in him he lost an invaluable friend.

## Edinburgh Again.

In 1833 Dr. Beaumont received his appointment again to Edinburgh. The following shows the state of his mind on entering upon his work: "I must set to in good earnest, and see what zealous preaching, holy living, constant praying, and patient suffering, with the divine blessing, will do here. And yet I am aware that Scotland does not present to our plow and harrow a fertile soil. But when I think of the divine Husbandman I cannot despair. Time flies; life wears away; duties and responsibilities deepen and multiply." The years he spent in Edinburgh were those of pleasure and profit.

### London Again—Receives the Degree of M.D.

At the Conference of 1836 Dr. Beaumont was appointed to Hinde-street, London, where he remained three years. London was the place for his transcendent talents, and there he made his mark. He returned from that Conference to Edinburgh to take his degree in medicine, which he had richly earned by intense application. Rather singularly, the subject of the essay he prepared for his examination was that which terminated his existence—*disease of the heart.*

### Biography of Mrs. Tatham.

While in London (in 1838) Dr. Beaumont prepared the biography of Mrs. Tatham, of Nottingham—a work of rare beauty, abounding in passages of elegance and eloquence, a work which not only had an extensive circulation in England, but was republished in America, where it is widely known.*

### Letter to a Young Minister.

Doctor Beaumont felt a peculiar interest in the welfare of the young, and especially of young men who were struggling to enter into the ministry, as the following letter to a young man, written in 1839, will show:

"Read the Bible much for your own personal edification, and read it with prayer. Let the word of God dwell in you richly in all wisdom, that you

*For sale by Nelson & Phillips, 805 Broadway.

may become a man of God 'thoroughly furnished unto all good works.' To be 'mighty in the Scriptures' is a great advantage, a worthy commendation of a minister of Christ. Seek to obtain a familiar, intimate, complete conscious possession and mastery of the capital truths, the first principles, the cardinal doctrines, the grand elements, of the Christian faith. These are the weapons of your warfare, and you must be able to use them readily, vigorously, authoritatively. The capital charm and power of good Methodist preaching was from the beginning, still is, and I trust will continue to be, the manly, clear, earnest, unequivocal, positive declaration of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus, a warm and bold enunciation of justification and sanctification.

"Next in order of practical value I am disposed to place the acquisition of *general knowledge*—the knowledge of men and things—of history and philosophy; and besides the acquisition of general history, and the study of mental philosophy and of logic, I lay great stress on natural history and natural philosophy. No doubt he is a learned man that knows words, but he is a *wise* man who knows things. As to languages, you should acquire as many of them as practicable. A good knowledge of Latin is important. The value of Greek will be considerable to you as a biblical student and a candidate for the Christian ministry. German is rich in philosophy and eloquence, and is undoubtedly a desideratum. French is an accomplishment and a convenience; and Hebrew is a high and sacred

attainment for a divine—a noble and venerable inheritance. *Read good English authors*, and some good poets; the latter, that your mind and ear may catch their harmonious numbers, and may be attuned to their capital rhythm, as well as their fine thoughts."

He then recommends a number of volumes; not only Wesleyan works, but a variety of others. "Jeremy Taylor's Works," he says, "are stored with thought and eloquence. Hooker's 'Ecclesiastical Polity' is a majestic work. Baxter is an incomparable writer, and cannot be read without profit to head and heart, and Howe's 'Living Temple' is a production of a great mind and filled with powerful eloquence. Knowledge is that of which, when once possessed, the intellect cannot be robbed; but always remember it is desirable to store your intellect rather than your memory. Recreative studies should not be neglected, and among these I reckon history and geography. Without the knowledge of the former, you cannot rank as a scholar; and without acquaintance with the latter, you must often feel yourself at fault on subjects of every-day interest and recurrence."

### The Gown.

At the Conference of 1840 there was an effort made to introduce among the Wesleyan ministry the wearing of the clerical gown. Dr. Beaumont opposed it vehemently, and had, as he said, "the credit or the blame of tearing the gown

to pieces." And it remains torn. An effort has never been made to introduce it into that body since.

### The Consequential Woman.

Dr. Beaumont was one of those who took the apostle's advice, "Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate." Once speaking of a lady he did not admire he said: "I did not like her; she is too cold, formal, mechanical, consequential, political, and ecclesiastical to suit my taste. I like heart, heat, feeling, and good sense; and all stiffness, and prim, set, icy, pretended state may go to the dogs for me, as it is really most opposite to good breeding and good manners."

### Beaumont's Love for the Beautiful in Nature and Art.

Dr. Beaumont admired the beautiful in nature and the beautiful in art. His powers of description were transcendent. He had a wonderful power of language; all the rich treasures of words were at his command, and he used figures naturally and beautifully. Nature unfolded her magnificent volume to him, and with delight he read her pages.

In 1841 he had been out into the country from Edinburgh, enjoying some beautiful scenes of nature, admiring the "hills, swelling in colossal grandeur and heavenmade beauty." He says: "I had intense delight in communing with rivers and trees, and valleys and mountains: but rich, and sparkling,

and eddying, and ever-flowing, as I felt the river which I gazed upon in its infinite windings and lowly moanings; vast, gigantic, grand, and sublime, as I felt to be the mountains in their loftiness; lovely, and soft, and home-like, as I felt to be the valleys along which we swept—commend me to the trees which fringe those valleys and bedeck those mountain sides. Never was I so delighted with the rich, luxuriant, lace-like, festooned foliage of the larch, or so much impressed by the heavy shade and matchless symmetry and towering stateliness of the fir, as when gazing on those noble vistas and mighty masses of our mother earth."

Again he says: "I have just returned from the realm of mountain, lake, and stream. The mountains are glorious, the lakes are beauteous, and the streams are children of the one and the parents of the other. The sense of power, vastness, energy, might, massiveness, and plenteousness which the mountains awake in the bosom, and set a-floating through the nerves, is truly exciting and gratifying. The Creator and the creation come upon us with prodigious force in such scenes. The heights of Skiddaw, of Helvellyn, and Saddleback draw one's poor self somewhat higher; their enduringness tells of eternity somewhere, though mortality is here; their extent and quantity convey a most welcome notion of fullness, sufficiency, abundance, nay, redundance; their varieties of form, and figure, and outline, realize the definition of beauty —variety in harmony; their sterile aspect seems to say to man that it is enough for him to look at

them and thence draw invigoration—power for his intellect—without abstracting from their surface food for his flesh; and their general insubordination to man's industrious hand, and grasping commerce, and all but almighty science, cries aloud to him from the heights of their untrodden, unbroken, unimagined solitudes, "Thus far shalt thou come and no farther," while their hidden contents who can conceive? But it is almost a law that where physical nature is barren superficially it is stored with internal riches. What mineral treasures may not those mountain masses contain! And thus it is with the dark, and gloomy, and withering dispensations of Divine providence: they look dark, and sterile, and cheerless, but they are pregnant with themes and lessons rich and enduring as the most precious metals deep-emboweled in the mighty mountains."

### Beaumont's Love for Flowers.

He not only had a universal love of beauty, but he was peculiarly fond of flowers. He speaks of flowers as "those gentle, beauteous children of the sunshine and the shower—those gifts fresh from the hand of Deity, rendering more beautiful the face of a world already rich with his bounty. Flowers may be said to be the poetry of nature, emblems of purity, grace, and beauty; the free-will offerings of Him whose benignity adorns the earth with loveliness. They are associated with the song of birds, with trees and streams, and with every thing fair and symmetrical in nature. They

are links in the mysterious chain, binding by delicate ties the heart of man to

"The good God, who loves and cares for all."

The ancient Greeks were passionate admirers of flowers, their love for them was boundless, as in them they found the most delicate and varied forms of beauty. In Scripture flowers are everywhere to be met with, quoted as incentives to faith, love, and duty.

At a certain time the Doctor was admiring the gorgeous colors made by a bed of beautiful verbenas; he exclaimed, as he was charmed with the loveliness of the scene, "Upon my word, a man can scarcely help taking off his hat before such exquisite creations of the Almighty."

## Love for Old Castles—Statues—Paintings—Woburn Abbey.

Dr. Beaumont delighted to visit old castles and the homes and haunts of the poets. In these places he was wont to wander, communing with the past and with the mighty dead. In October, 1831, he writes: "I visited Woburn Abbey, that magnificent seat of the Duke of Bedford. It is particularly rich in painting and sculpture. Of the latter there is a most spacious and lofty gallery —a separate building from the house—at one end of which is the Temple of the Graces, at the other the Temple of Liberty—the one being the shrine of beauty, the other that of Whiggism. In the latter, of course the central divinity is Charles J.

Fox, the subordinate deities being Mr. Hare, Lord Holland, Earl Grey, etc. The statues from Rome, Egypt, Ephesus, and other cradles and nurseries of the arts, I gazed on with more of admiration and delight than I had supposed my nature susceptible of. I always feel after such a day's inquisition into these collections of intellectual and artistic riches—the true source of pride, the real beauties of our globe—every way a less despicable person than I was before."

### Home of the Poet Moore—of Rousseau.

In January, 1842, Dr. Beaumont was in Mayfield, within the precincts of Dovedale, one of England's most charming scenes. He says: "Within a few hundred yards of the chapel in which I preached is a cottage which was inhabited several years by Moore, the poet, and in which he composed his 'Lalla Rookh.' It is now tenanted by a Methodist farmer, who brought me from Tutbury, but did not even tell me that his dwelling-place had been haunted by a spirit fresh from the dews of Parnassus! He stared when I presented myself after the afternoon service upon his fairy ground. *Cheeses* are now produced where *splendid fancies* had their birth; and the locality in which Moore's genius caught and displayed rare beauties is deserted. The charm of the place is destroyed; yet I was not without the feeling that it possessed some real interest, and I could not help tearing from a tree a branch, not wholly without the feeling that it partook of that interest from the by-gone inhabit-

ation of the spot on which it grew. How all things change!" In the same neighborhood Dr. Beaumont saw the house in which Rosseau dwelt so long, and said: "His cap is still in Derbyshire, and treasured up as a relic of departed greatness."

In 1854 Beaumont made another visit to this place of unparalleled beauty, and thus describes it: "The other day I went to Dovedale, close to Ashbourne. It is a scene of great natural beauty, composed of glens, and rocks, and woods, and water. The river Dove, winding among the whole with its quiet, pellucid stream, revealing its treasured and beautiful tenants, the trout and grayling, adds to the charm."

### Shakspeare's Birthplace—The Indignant Woman.

In July, 1843, Dr. Beaumont preached at Stratford-upon-Avon, after which he went to see the house in which Shakspeare was born. What multitudes from all parts of the world have visited that old house, around which such rich poetic interests cluster! Princes and nobles, poets and painters, statesmen and divines have made their pilgrimage to this shrine of genius. Dr. Beaumont thus describes it:

"The house is a low-pitched, antiquated building, in the upper room of which that great creature first saw the light. It is a room so low that the ceiling may be touched by the hand, and it is written upon all over with the names of visitors, all the walls being written over in the same manner.

Names, names, names, innumerable, noble and ignoble, are there; and it was with difficulty I could find room to insert mine. The stream of visitors thither embraces many foreigners of distinction and consideration. Americans in numbers wend their way to Stratford-upon-Avon. One of them would sleep in the room not long ago, and accordingly a mattress was procured, on which he lay till morning, catching inspiration from the natal room of nature's own child and art's best disciple! Some time ago a female who had charge of the favored dwelling, but was compelled to quit it, in her vexation and *diabolism* whitewashed its walls and ceiling, and entombed, as she thought, the glorious assemblage of names written by hands which had come from the east and the west, the north and the south. But the whitewash was removed by some chemical process, and a full revelation was again obtained of them."

### The Birthplace of Locke.

In November, 1851, Dr. Beaumont was at Wrington. "There," he says, "Locke was born, and we went into the house and room where he first saw the light. It is now inhabited by very poor people, and is going fast to decay."

### Barley Wood—The Home of Hannah More.

"At Wrington, also, is Barley Wood, which was the favorite residence of Hannah More. She is buried in a tomb in the church-yard of Wrington,

in which lie, also, four of her sisters—in all five maiden ladies—inclosed in one resting-place. In the church there is a very large and elegant marble tablet to the memory of the celebrated Hannah. In part of the same church, inclosed by a screen, there is a desk on which are five folio books, well bound, all chained to the place in which they are arranged for the purpose of being read. The first is a Bible, a very fine black-letter copy, well to look on and easy to read; another is a book of 'Acts and Sufferings' of Martyrs; another consists of Luther's disputations. I was very much interested in the church, and those precious things so well secured in it. Barley Wood, after the death of Hannah More, (all her sisters having preceded her to the tomb,) was sold, and is now possessed by Mr. Harford, who is not only a wealthy gentleman but one of great taste. He permitted us most kindly to see the house, took us over the dining-room and drawing-room himself, and described his pictures. Many of these he brought from Italy himself, and some he had prepared there by its inimitable artists under his own orders. We then strolled through the beautiful walks in the wood, in which we met, here and there, with some stone monuments—one to Locke, presented to Hannah More by Mrs. Montague; another to Bishop Porteus, who was a great friend and patron of the authoress."

### Beaumont as a Letter Writer.

Dr. Beaumont was an elegant letter writer. Happy were those who had him for a correspond-

ent. His letters to his wife and children are models; they show the kind of husband and father he was. Never was a man happier in his domestic relations; home was his earthly paradise, his terrestrial Eden. His letters to his friends were beautiful. He frequently corresponded with Mrs. Rowley, the gifted daughter of his friend, Dr. Adam Clarke.

### Beautiful Extracts—Methodistic Fire.

"Take away excitement and fervor from Methodism and you would reduce it to, and leave it, a decent and respectable, but a shriveled, powerless, and ever diminishing thing. A calm, meditative, lofty, reasoning, philosophic, thoughtful, soul-sublimating religion is all very well for those who have mind and education, and taste, and leisure; but the multitude must be dealt with as such, and pressed and *im*pressed, according to the grossness and quantity, and other circumstances, of their aggregate bulk. For my own part, I had infinitely rather Methodism were like Samson when tearing up the gates of the city of Gaza, than like him when his locks were shorn off in the lap of Delilah."

### The Sufferings of Christ.

"O, there is One, who, enveloped in a more ghastly gloom than that which vailed the shud dering heavens over Mount Calvary, felt himself for some mysterious moments in the appalling con dition of a creature abandoned of God, and who,

while a chill of unimagined horror fell upon his spirit, exclaimed in his astonishment, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'"

### The Benefit of Suffering.

While passing through suffering scenes in 1841, Dr. Beaumont wrote thus: "Many things crowd upon me just now, and some haunt me, and at times oppress my spirit. O, for a clear and steady light to flow down from the Father of Lights upon my misty pathway, in this troubled, shadowy, solemn scene. But sometimes I feel as though I walk with angels and with God; that I am a creature of eternity, though a tenant and trustee of time. How is it that I cannot help thinking continually, as feeling depths within, still deepening as I go? I do believe that suffering strengthens the mind; that suffering for God and truth is a tonic to it; that suffering in the cause of divine charity girds up the loins of an intelligent agent. May the Almighty deign to accept my services, and use them to his glory; for my faculties and powers, endowments and capabilities, such as they are, were not given by man, nor of men did I receive them; and therefore to God I devoutly consecrate all I am."

### Patience in Tribulation.

In 1842 Dr. Beaumont was visited with a sore affliction. He tells his mournful story thus: "My health has greatly, lamentably, failed me. In April I was seized with violent inflammation of

my right hand and wrist. Pain—agonizing, deep-seated, grinding pain — I have had to struggle with, and this has gnawed the little flesh off my bones, and I have been looking wretched, emaciated, sunken, and woe begone indeed. My hand and wrist had been the scene of inflammation—violent, acute inflammation—and my constitution has been invaded, shaken, damaged, and reduced by disease. So I must now and henceforth deem myself unsound—a frail, fractured vessel; an endangered, imperfect instrument; a thing of naught. Let me not, however, be fretful or unthankful, misty and painful as the way is along which I am moving. Over the future thick shadows have been gathering, and portentous thunder-clouds have seemed to stretch across the pathway of my vision and of my footsteps. Murky vapors have rolled themselves with embattled masses, on the fringes of which I have almost read the words, 'Thus far shalt thou go and no farther.' But He that made a highway for Israel through the Red Sea, and through the wilderness, and through the Jordan, can and may, and perhaps will, make a way for one of the most worthless of his servants to pass on in an humble career of pain and usefulness after this long halt, in pain and sorrow, in weakness and fear. To Him I commit myself; to His holy will I have resigned my being with all its issues. I am forty-eight years old, and were life to close now something has been done and something has been suffered."

### Cheerfulness in Affliction.

There was a vein of innocent pleasantry running through the Doctor that manifested itself even in the midst of pain. He never despaired. In the darkest hour he hoped on. Every storm had its bow of promise, and every cloud its silver lining.

### The Gout.

The complaint of which he suffered so much was pronounced the gout, the rheumatic gout. He said, "Well, least of all should I have expected a visitation of gout, of which there are two sorts, the one rich and the other poor gout; and as mine cannot be the former it must be the latter."

### The Large Heart.

Dr. Beaumont consulted Dr. Armstrong about the state of his heart, which at that time was believed to be diseased. Dr. Armstrong, after having examined him, said he would stake his reputation that there was nothing the matter with his heart. Looking at him intensely and firmly, he said, "There is nothing the matter with your heart, but it is a *large heart* and it is a sensitive heart." Years after, in relating this incident, Dr. Beaumont said, "I know nothing about its largeness, but with its sensitiveness I have had some acquaintance, and *that* has laid heavy burdens upon it."

### The Venerable Tree.

There was a venerable tree at Kingswood rendered immortal by John Wesley having preached to the colliers under its shade. It was a memorial of other days. In a severe storm in 1842 it blew down, and Dr. Beaumont thus wrote to his son Joseph: "So the crazy old sycamore came down in a gale. Well, I am pleased you have been under it when last it was standing—two generations of us having thus been familiar with this respectable piece of vegetable antiquity, with which so many pleasing associations are connected. I have sung and prayed under its branches nearly forty years ago, and you have mused under its bare branches and decaying trunk, and now it is gone! Happy for us if when we shall have passed away from the living as many pleasing reminiscences shall embalm our names."

### Advice for a Young Lady.

He writes to Mrs. Rowley concerning a young lady friend.

"My dear friend —— certainly is growing stronger both as woman and as a mind, as the letter you have sent proves to a demonstration. She has been cast in a noble mold, and well is she responding to it. The soil will repay cultivation. Advise her to allow the sunlight of revelation, of heaven's own revelation, to stream through the cavities of her mind, and love and grace and truth and purity shall enrich it immeasurably, and there shall play

upon it the same light which plays upon the everlasting hills, that bedecks the wings of cherubim, flashing and streaming from the Father of Lights, who sits enthroned in the highest heaven. And tell her that it is a sort of heaven to know that that revelation will infallibly lead all who follow it, and by whom it is absorbed, into the inner shrine of the eternal, there to gaze upon its unimaginable beauty with infinite ecstasy and ineffable delight for ever and for evermore!"

### Beautiful Beginning and Conclusion.

The commencement and the conclusion of his letters are inimitably happy. To a friend he wishes a happy new year thus: "May the revolutions of this our planet round the mighty sun be many ere your hand shall forget its cunning, and may He who formed it hold you in his own right hand, and infuse fresh streams of his intelligence and graciousness and joyousness into your being, ever more surrounding it with his guardianship, ennobling it with his truth and fullness, sublimating it with his holiness, satisfying it with his goodness, doing for you exceeding abundantly above all I can ask or think."

He thus concludes a letter to his son: "While you grow in stature take care that you grow also in wisdom, and not only in favor with man but with God also."

To a friend: "'Tis winter. How happy the state in which there shall be no such thing! May we dwell

> 'Where everlasting spring abides
> And never withering flowers.'

To the Sun of Righteousness I commend you!" And again: "Let us dwell and revel, feed and dilate, in

'Love divine, all love excelling;'

and may the Day Star arise in your heart, and may it throb and swell with this ineffable divine love!"

## Antislavery, Teetotalism, and the Evangelical Alliance.

The Doctor was ever ready to help every good work. He was a strong antislavery man, and identified himself with teetotalism. He was a prominent member of the Evangelical Alliance, formed in London, August, 1846, and he did noble service in arranging the articles of faith which were the platform they agreed upon. After they had been adopted, with their amendments, the excellent Rev. Edward Bickersteth delivered an address. He began with, "Glory to God our heavenly Father, who has conducted us so harmoniously to such results as have now been witnessed among us! What a combination of solemn, weighty, all-important truths we have here to present to the whole Christian world. . . . I rejoice that the motion of Dr. Beaumont has been carried; it has given me great pleasure, as many of his statements have done, and that he has had the comfort of having helped us in regard to the orderly arrangement of our doctrines." * This is a high commen-

* Report of the Evangelical Alliance, page 190.

dation considering the source from which it emanates; for they were grand men who composed that august body.

### Beaumont's Humor and Anecdotal Powers.

Dr. Beaumont was distinguished for his rich humor. He was the life of the social circle, where he scattered sunshine all around. This sometimes appeared, too, in public, in the conference, and on the platform. He abounded with anecdotes, which he sometimes related with peculiar zest. He was sometimes as playful as a child, and yet as innocent as the lamb.

At a certain time there was a missionary meeting, and the secretary read a doleful report concerning some heathen who had cut up Bibles and made sandals of them. The report produced a chill, and the audience looked sad. Dr. Beaumont was then introduced, and said: "Mr. Chairman, I feel greatly encouraged from that cheering report. There is, sir, one passage of Scripture I could never understand until I heard that report, and that is, *they shall have their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.*"

### Ecclesiastical Difficulties.

In regard to the Church, though a genuine Methodist, and dearly loving the cause to which he had devoted his life, he sympathized with the so called "Reformers;" and though he was never identified with them, his favor for them brought

him somewhat under the ban of the conference; but he was still unboundedly popular with the people. They offered to erect him a church edifice if he would leave the conference; but he said "No; whatever difficulties may arise, to leave Methodism would be to tear out my heart-strings." He was determined to stand by the old ship.

Some one hinted in the conference that Dr. Beaumont could leave it if he was dissatisfied. The Doctor gave him an annihilating look, and said with tremendous emphasis, every feature of his countenance expressing the determinate resolution of his soul, "*I am not going to throw away the sweat of my brow, and the work of my brain, for the forty years that are past.*" At another time some one was asserting something in the conference dogmatically. Dr. Beaumont inquired ironically: "Are we to understand that the conference is concentrated in that brother?"

Dr. Beaumont was suspected of knowing who had written some documents offensive to the conference; but while he protested against being interrogated concerning the author or authors, said, "If I had written them I would have been ashamed to look my brethren in the face."

A certain weak-kneed brother withdrew his objection to being interrogated. Dr. Beaumont saw the brother's hat in a pew near him, and said, in a humorous tone, "I move the brother have leave to withdraw his hat also."

### Beaumont's Personal Appearance.

We are always anxious to know the personal appearance of eminent men. Dr. Beaumont's son Joseph gives the following glowing description of his father: "He did not much excel the middle height, but he was powerful and well-proportioned, graceful and agile; his countenance was broad and massive, but molded with great refinement, and beaming with expressiveness. He was of fair complexion, somewhat ruddy, and every feature was marked with a striking individuality. His hair—in later years varying in color, now brown, now silver, now nearly black—flowed almost unrestrained, and with singular softness and grace, over a brow which was remarkably lofty, delicately modeled, and to which its beautiful proportions and the open, expansive temples gave a magnified appearance. His eyes, which were small and deeply set, were of that brilliant blue which is more often talked of by poets and lovers than seen, themselves most eloquent, ever gleaming with the fire of an ardent soul, but full of love and tenderness. His mouth betokened all the wealth, and power, and sensitiveness of his character; it was large and mobile, and, while full of earnestness and thought in its expression, it was constantly relieved by an ever-varying play of sentiment, humor, and kindliness. Nor were his other features or his *contour* wanting in expressiveness, but all aided to produce a countenance singularly brilliant, powerful, and attractive."

### Beaumont's Characteristics.

Dr. Beaumont was distinguished for his domestic attachments, for decision of character, for a fine mind, for ripe scholarship, for untiring industry, for unwavering faith, for unfaltering courage, for his catholic spirit, for deep devotion, and for his intense love for Zion.

He says: "I am jealous over myself. I would that all my motives were like so many moral crystals, that all my feelings were like so many waves of sunlight. I would be thankful, pure, high, truthful, untainted with self and pride." How strongly does this remind one of the apostle's admonition, which he would seem to have had in mind and to be modeling after: "Let no man think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but, in all lowliness of mind, let each esteem others better than himself."

### Beaumont as an Orator.

Dr. Beaumont had all the peculiar qualities of an orator. He had not only a splendid presence, but a magnificent voice. It was not like Cicero's, silver-toned; but like that of Demosthenes, organ-like. It was deep-toned, powerful, exceedingly mellifluous, and susceptible of exquisite modulation. It is said he had two voices, one bass, and the other tenor, and that he would change from one to the other at pleasure. He had, too, a fine imagination. Within him lay an ocean of thought and a world of genius. Every thing in nature and art he

brought into contribution to aid him in impressing truth upon the minds and hearts of his auditors.

His descriptive powers were astonishing, and every thing in his hands appeared truthful, life-like. His moral painting was perfect. When animated with his theme every thing was a picture, and his sermons a series of beautiful pictures. Nothing could be more complete than his imagery. Every thing lived and moved in his discourses. If he spoke of the creation, you could see the Creator bespangling the heavens; if he spoke of angels, his hearers could see their golden pinions, and hear the melody of their voices. If he described the celestial city, his hearers saw the white-robed multitude with their palms of victory, and heard their songs of joy and shouts of triumph.

He had a wonderful command of language, as well as a knowledge of the different shades of meaning. All the riches and treasures of language were at his command; his ideas and words flowed from him like water from a spring or from an overflowing fountain.

Dr. Beaumont had most vivid conceptions and deep feelings, that burned within him as an internal fire. His heart was as a fountain that sent out in living streams the light and love and power that dwelt within him. The sacred fire glowed within him, the baptism of fire rested upon him; so his were "thoughts that breathe and words that burn." He had amazing sympathy, so he could touch the fountain of tears, and whole audiences were moved and melted and subdued

under his living pathos, his touching tenderness From the first he had command over them, so he molded them at his will and melted them into tears.

### Beaumont's Peculiarities as a Preacher.

Dr. Beaumont was distinguished, as a preacher, for originality. He studied the best sermons in the English and other languages for models of style, but he was no man's copyist. He never made a display with borrowed feathers. There is said to be a slight resemblance between his style and that of Jeremy Taylor and Bishop Hall.

Beaumont's discourses were not moral essays—he preached. He was an expounder of the word. He was like Apollos, "mighty in the Scriptures." This was his forte. Here he showed himself a skilled workman.

He was an extemporaneous preacher. He studied his sermons. He prepared them with great care. They were written, but he never read them in the pulpit. He sometimes had a skeleton with him, but he made little use of it. It would have been a singular sight to have beheld this son of thunder, whose words rushed forward like Niagara, carrying along every thing with them, reading his sermons. We might as well think of angels singing redemption's anthem over the plains of Bethlehem from a note-book.

His sermons were distinguished for power. He preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. They were delivered with tremendous

unction, with overwhelming pathos. He understood the great secret of successful preaching—adaptation. The introduction to his sermon was brief and natural, the conclusion powerful. He believed, with some old writer, that "application is the life of preaching, and self-application the life of the preacher."

### Beaumont's Description of his Sermons.

Dr. Beaumont gives a description of his preaching, and it is full of interest: "On Sunday last, Nov. 18, 1841, I preached at Pitt-street, Liverpool, on 'He shall swallow up death in victory,' and at night from Job xi, 4, and xiii, 5, 6. I struggled with the great idea of the Idumean patriarch, that the felt presence of God subdued him to penitence and lowly abasement, and *that* the presence of God in his physical perfections, in which the power of Jehovah is so wondrously displayed; and then I argued that as is his power so is his purity, and hence the deep and salutary impression described in the language from which I discoursed to the people."

The next Sabbath Dr. Beaumont preached in the City Road Chapel, London. He says: "The weather was most forbidding, therefore in the morning the chapel was not full; but the Gospel, I believe, was there in its fullness, not in word only but in power. I have seldom felt more deeply and delightfully, or spoken with more or visible effect. The attention of the congregation was solemn and affecting, and I can never forget it. The secretion

from a certain gland near the eye was manifested to a large extent over the congregation—the flashes of truth, the tides of feeling, the emotions of the preacher were spread over the audience, and not, I pray, in vain. The text in the morning was from Romans iii, 22 : 'Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference.' The sermon was an hour and ten minutes long."

The reader will not wonder at its length when he considers its breadth and its depth. It is a discourse of uncommon beauty, brilliancy, and power. To read it, even now, moves and melts the heart, and stirs the depths of the soul. What must it have been to have heard it from the lips of that impassioned orator, when, full of his subject, and the unction of the Holy One resting upon him, it must have thrilled his auditors like the music of the upper sanctuary—like the melody of the skies. I have just read it, and it has moved my heart, melted my soul, and bedewed my cheeks with tears.

The reader will rejoice to find this discourse in the volume of sermons, the seventh in number, which will well repay his reading.

The same evening he preached from Phil. ii, 5–11, from, "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God," etc. Take it altogether, it is a mighty text, a tremendous theme. I am sorry this is not among his printed sermons. Dr. Beaumont says concerning it: "The chapel was crowded, and I preached

with considerable freedom and enlargement ; but it was physically impossible so to speak and feel as in the morning. Two such states and conditions of mind and body within six and seven hours is impossible. Yet the immense assembly hung on the words that flowed for an hour and twenty minutes, and absorbed them as the thirsty land drinks in the shower. Really there must be no small elasticity in my personal substance to admit of these continued exertions. Still I am dissatisfied with myself, and would fain flee from all disquietude and anxious care, from doubt and fear, from sin and hell, to that wondrous *One* who rises on the soul and on the world with healing in his wings.'

### Beaumont as a Platform Speaker.

Dr. Beaumont was distinguished as a platform speaker and had great celebrity among other denominations. He made a missionary address at the jubilee of the London Missionary Society in Dr. Raffles' church, with Dr. Raffles and others.

### Beaumont and Sir Robert Peel.

These men had frequently met, and for Sir Robert Peel Dr. Beaumont had a high regard. In 1847 Sir Robert presided at the anniversary of the Tamworth Bible Society, of which he was president and patron. Dr. Beaumont was one of the principal speakers, and delivered a characteristic address that astonished his audience and charmed Sir Robert. His speech is said to have been " argumenta-

tive, comprehensive, finished, perfect." His first sentence was, "We are meeting in conformity with the great law of the universe—diffusion—which is the law of the physical universe, and prevails there, as it is also the law of the moral universe, and a law that prevails there too when ignorance, prejudice, and self-interest do not come in to thwart it." At the close of the meeting Sir Robert went up to him, and, cordially shaking him by the hand, said, "I am happy to have the pleasure of making your acquaintance," and he afterward inquired of a friend where Dr. Beaumont regularly officiated.

Dr. Beaumont so highly esteemed the character of Sir Robert Peel that after his death he preached a funeral sermon in reference to him.

### Beaumont and Dr. Olin.

Dr. Beaumont delighted in interviews with great men from America, and was ever ready to do them justice.

He says (in Dec. 1840:) "I was called upon by Dr. Olin, of America, who is on his way back to that roomy country, after touring it on the continent to Rome, Geneva, the Levant, and so on. He is a first-rate man—intellectual, learned, commanding, vigorous; very tall in person, and seems to have a mind of similar height. He informed me that he owed his conversion instrumentally to Dr. Adam Clarke's Commentary, which he formerly searched merely for the literature, philosophy, history, and criticism, 'with which it is stored,'

said he, 'as the ark was with all manner of seeds for the life of a new world.' While reading from that wonderful production, he every now and then stumbled on a portion of the Commentary which struck his heart, and rushed with mighty force through his conscience. So he was led to seek the truth, and *that* followed which ever does follow the clearly apprehending and really believing the truth as it is in Jesus—*a new creation.* He remarked that the Bible, the Book of Discipline, and Dr. Clarke's Commentary form the library of the great body of the Methodists in America. 'The Commentary,' he says, 'has an extraordinary hold and reception there.'"

### Beaumont and Dr. Durbin.

In August, 1841, Dr. Beaumont heard Rev. Dr. J. P. Durbin preach in the City Road Chapel, London. He says, "He preached a good, clear, short sermon on justification, from the five last verses in the fourth chapter of Romans."

### Reminiscences of Dr. Beaumont.

Such has been my admiration for Dr. Beaumont for many years that I have delighted to converse with those who had seen and heard him and with pleasure have listened to their description of him and his preaching. Over twenty years ago a local preacher born in the same town with the Doctor and who knew him intimately, gave me the following reminiscences concerning him:

### THE DEDICATION OF A CHAPEL.

In 1829 a chapel was dedicated in Southwark one Wednesday. Dr. Adam Clarke preached in the morning and Robert Newton in the evening. They were massive sermons. On the Sabbath following Theophilus Lessey preached, in the morning, a masterly discourse from Eph. iii, 10, "*The manifold wisdom of God.*" In the afternoon Dr. Beaumont preached. Before he took his text he looked around the platform, (on which were seated a number of the preachers, among them Mr. Lessey,) and said "Ah! Brother Lessey, you robbed me of my text in the former part of the day; but, thank God! his 'manifold wisdom' you spoke of so gloriously has provided me with another," and then he impressively read for his text, "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." With his usual vigor he began, and with his usual rapidity he dashed into the subject and into his congregation, rousing among his hearers elements previously unknown and unfelt. On hearing this original production — these master thoughts on such old things as sin and salvation, of sinners and of a Saviour for all—the Gospel never vibrated so sweetly before or sent forth such melodious sounds. Beaumont's first appearance and first efforts everywhere only increased a desire on the part of his hearers for another visit.

BIBLE MEETING.

This local preacher invited him to attend a Bible meeting in the place where he lived.

The dignitaries were there, the *elite* of the place. Dr. Beaumont was introduced by the chairman. He made a most brilliant address, thrilling and captivating the audience. He went through his subject like a master workman, dealing out stubborn facts and striking incidents; now exhibiting the power of divine truth, and then showing the signal triumphs of divine grace; both in the case of the living and the dead, at home and abroad—wrought chiefly by the lively oracles of God. Never had there been held such a meeting in that place; never before had that society received such a mighty impetus; on no occasion was the treasury so enlarged. Joseph Beaumont was unknown there, and they were astonished at such overpowering eloquence. From that time his fame was spread abroad in all that region.

MISSIONARY MEETING.

There was a great missionary meeting at Southwark; Rev. Mr. Gaulter, venerable for years, Robert Newton, T. Lessey, and Dr. Beaumont were the speakers. After the rest had spoken, Dr. Beaumont was introduced by the chairman. The hero of the field came forward to the front of the platform with a "full head of steam on," and he rolled forth unceasingly volumes of the most stirring and striking images drawn from the book of Revelation.

In that memorable speech he introduced a bright thought of surpassing eloquence from Homer's Iliad illustrative of feeble man engaging in the all important work of saving men, "threshing the mountains, pulling them up by the roots."

He quoted the beautiful words of Charles Wesley, as only Beaumont could quote them:

> "See how great a flame aspires,
> Kindled by a spark of grace!
> Jesus' love the nations fires,
> Sets the kingdoms on a blaze," etc.

During the address he was tremendously excited, and he rushed forward like a race horse. When Dr. Beaumont sat down amid the astonishment and admiration of a vast crowd, the venerable chairman (Mr. Gaulter) arose, and, with a countenance full of mischief, in the most playful manner said to Dr. Beaumont, "Bless you, my boy, I love to hear you speak; but that bright thought you so happily played with, and which told so forcibly upon us, was not original; it was not your own; I know," said Gaulter humorously, "from whence you stole that gem." This aroused Beaumont, whose bright eyes shone with additional luster, as he ran his fingers through his long locks which hung in ringlets, at the same time showing his small, well-set teeth, and giving Mr. Gaulter a wonderful look. Robert Newton enjoyed it, and laughed outright, shaking his broad sides exceedingly.

The meeting for interest, warmth of feeling, power, and efficiency, exceeded by far any that had been held in that place.

## Beaumont's Beauty of Style.

A gentleman told me he heard Dr. Beaumont preach on the martyrdom of Stephen: "And they stoned Stephen . . . and . . . he fell asleep," and it was overwhelmingly grand. "Fell asleep!" said the Doctor: "Stephen was stoned. Fell asleep! Stephen was murdered. Fell asleep!" said he, "Amid a shower of stones. To go to sleep under such circumstances was peculiar. Asleep—asleep in Jesus, at the close of the day of life." A Congregational minister heard him with transcendent delight, and said, it was the master-piece of all the sermons he had ever heard.

Another heard his sermon on "Peter's Walking on the Water." Suchwas its beauty and grandeur, it made a lifetime impression on him. Also, from "God so loved the world." Inimitably beautiful! Another was "captivated, thrilled, and awed," as the Doctor preached from, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be."

It may be thought I have exaggerated his powers of eloquence, and therefore I adduce testimonials.

The annexed graphic description of Dr. Beaumont is from the gifted pen of the late Robert A. West, a gentleman who was personally acquainted with Dr. Beaumont, and who held him in high estimation. His description does no more than justice to the Doctor's amazing powers:

"The fame of the Rev. Dr. Beaumont as a preacher is not confined to "Albion's sea-girt isle." It has

reached this continent, and it is no uncommon thing to hear his name mentioned, not only by those of his countrymen who are now residents in the United States, but by Americans who have visited England, and, attracted by his high reputation, have sought opportunities of listening to his eloquent advocacy of the truth. These differ, as was to be expected, in their estimate of his pulpit talents and the degree of admiration they accord to him. Some think him too vehement, others are led captive by his earnestness; some think his imagination excessive and his imagery bordering upon extravagance, others find an imposing charm in his exuberance of fancy; some think him not sufficiently argumentative and logical, and others again admire his power of declamation and of pictorial representation. But they all, so far as personal observation extends, agree that he is a man of wonderful genius, sincere and zealous in his holy vocation, possessing, in a remarkable degree, the power of swaying the hearts of his hearers, and eminently fitted to keep upon their watch-towers, or lead on to conquests, any division of the army of the living God of which he may be in command.

"In a remarkable degree Dr. Beaumont, as a pulpit orator, affords room for this variety of opinion, while the *tout ensemble* entirely justifies the agreement in which all those opinions meet. He is altogether an extraordinary man, under whose ministry it is always profitable and delightful to sit, yet whose defects immediately arrest the at-

tention of the intelligent and observant hearer. His very eloquence is peculiar, and heightens both the beauties and blemishes of his style. At times it has all the impetuosity of a rushing torrent, leaping down rapids, bounding over rocks, and dashing through ravines, that seem to echo and reverberate with its roar. But then it has also its lull in almost equal proportions, when it seems to sleep in its placid bed, or ripples with wondrously sweet music between its flowery banks. In these more quiet moments the hearer has time to look back on the scenery through which he has passed; and reflection, which was held in abeyance to the pleasing turbulence of emotion, is brought into play. He remembers a succession of sublime and beautiful imagery, of vivid pictures drawn with all the boldness and distinctness of reality; but they have rapidly receded from view, the very perfection of each having tended to supplant the impression of the former. Or, speaking more strictly, the hearer has been so captivated by the startling rapidity of majestic objects that he has not observed the windings of the stream, or whither its course was leading him, and, while lost in admiration of the pictorial beauty of the scene, has had no time for investigation and analysis.

"There is in his sermons more of illustration than logic, of declamation than argument. Light flashes upon the audience at every turn; but it is the sudden blaze of genius, rather than the steady effulgence of ripe and matured thought.

"He has more to do with the heart and conscience than with metaphysical distinctions; with the business and bosoms of men than with the schools, though he is by no means unversed in their teachings. The arrangement of his discourses has reference to the points available for effect, and is so far in accordance with their matter and the manner of their delivery.

"As a pulpit orator, perhaps he has no superior in effective ministration of the word; and I apprehend he is at this day as popular as any minister in the Wesleyan Connection, unless Dr. Newton be an exception. Whenever he preaches, either in his own circuit or elsewhere, he commands overflowing congregations. Like Dr. Newton, he is popular with all. It is not with either the higher or lower classes alone that he finds favor; not with the purely intellectual and refined alone, any more than with those only, of whom there are always too many, who live mainly upon emotion or excitement. The literate and illiterate alike crowd to hear him, and reap pleasure and profit from his ministry. Even the profound thinker, while he feels that, to some extent, there is a falling short of the standard congenial to his tastes, still gathers a harvest of brilliant ideas, and feels the impetus of his impassioned utterance. Indeed, none can resist it. When the gush of feeling is upon him, when the glow of genius is kindled, the fire in his bones consumes every thing before it. Light bursts from every sentence, now with the fierceness of the "forked lightning's glare," now

with the sublime but softened beauty of the electric flash behind the summer cloud, and anon with the splendor of the midday sun and with its burning heat. Image upon image is piled with majestic grandeur and dazzling gorgeousness; a moment after, the minutest forms of created things are pressed into the preacher's service for the illustration of his subject; and all so instinct with life that it seems as though the real, rather than the ideal, was present before the audience. Sometimes, indeed, the preacher seems himself to be the personation of the symbol employed, so perfectly does he embody his idea, and so entirely in keeping is every intonation and action. I remember one remarkable instance of this, though the occasion is now so remote that I cannot recall the speaker's felicitous language, and, therefore, the figure will be shorn of much of its beauty.

"Dr. Beaumont was preaching in one of the Salford (Manchester) chapels. In the progress of the discourse he was led to speak of the 'riches of wisdom and knowledge' and consolation which the true believer might gather from the sacred word. It was 'sweeter than honey or the honeycomb.' But it was by diligent searching only that its hidden treasures could be secured. Carrying out the idea, he depicted the bee, industriously prosecuting its search for honey, darting across the cultivated garden, sipping nectar and lading itself with store-honey from every opening flower; now flying over the wide-spread moor, finding treasures of sweetness even in the modest

flowers of wild thyme and the delicately tinted petals of the humble heather, and anon humming blithely its merry, grateful song, as it sought its homeward way by the deep ravine, and even there found new treasures as it alighted for a moment upon the lowly primrose or retiring violet. But no types, no language, especially where memory is the only guide, can convey to the reader a tithe of the beauties of the illustration as orally presented by the preacher. Placing the Bible under his arm, and pressing it to his heart as a treasure 'more precious than rubies,' he dwelt in measured cadence upon the picture, adapting his intonations so exactly to the rapid movements, the sudden haltings and startings of the laborious insect, that hearers seemed to journey with him through garden, and moorland, and clefts of rocks, and almost to see the ideal insect, and hear its joyful hum, as it now hovered over the inviting flower, or, rejoicing over its spoils, sped its rapid flight to its refuge and home. I have listened to not a few glowing scenes from nature, but never heard I so perfect a poetic impersonation — for it was more than painting; it had life, and motion, and voice. And such displays of pictorial power were by no means rare. I marvel not at Dr. Beaumont's popularity, he has all the elements of it, with an abundant zeal which spares no strength or labor in his master's service." *

Another friend of mine, who often heard Dr. Beaumont preach, and was his enthusiastic admirer

* Sketches of Wesleyan Preachers.

thus writes his recollections of the great Wesleyan orator:

"Dr. Beaumont was about five and a half feet in height; he was a well built, healthy looking man. His hair was auburn, his eyes were small and dark blue, his countenance beamed with intelligence and benignity. He was dignified and commanding in his appearance, and you saw at once he was no ordinary man. His glance was quick and penetrating, his step firm and manly, his whole appearance conveying the idea of self-reliance. He was affable, kind, generous and gentlemanly, and yet prepared, with all due deference to others, to maintain with manly and Christian firmness his own cherished principles. Such was the man.

"In the pulpit he was king, wielding massive thoughts in a right royal manner, and with the sweetness, beauty and pathos of one whose heart was running over with tenderness, and continually sending out a flame of love.

"Men of letters, taste and poetry, as well as the rustics from the plow, alike heard him, and under his breathing thoughts and burning words felt, wept, trembled and rejoiced together, being moved and melted under the magic influence of his overpowering eloquence.

"The trembling of his frame, the raising of his hand, the shaking of his head, the stamp of his foot, all gave impressiveness to his utterances. His thoughts were massive, expressed in choice and well-selected language, accompanied by an unction from the

Holy One. His sentences were like pearls, polished and set, forming a diadem of truth and beauty.

"I heard him at Wesley Chapel, Birmingham, from, 'For the soul to be without knowledge is not good.' The effort was stupendous, and one great thought seemed to pervade all minds, that ignorance was the principal occasion of vice.

"I heard him also from 'He saved others, himself he cannot save.' He startled us by the first sentence. He said, 'We have here, first, a great truth; second, a palpable lie.' He inverted their order. 'I shall demonstrate the last, and then show the truth of the first proposition.' He showed that He who was almighty could save himself. He dwelt upon his infinite resources: that he who gave himself to save men could have saved himself; that all the soldiers in Jerusalem could not have hung him upon the cross, nor all the nails in Palestine have kept him there if he had not willed it. But when he came to exhibit the fact '*He saved others*,' the effect was overwhelming, and a general shout of joy and gratitude made the crowded church ring.

"I can never forget the thrilling effect of his sermon on 'The Barren Fig-tree.' There was wondrous grandeur in that descriptive sermon. The sinner was made to feel that if lost he was the author of his own damnation; why he was spared so long, and how reluctantly the Master at last cried, 'Cut it down; cut it down.' No wonder scores were awakened and the altar crowded with mourners. His preaching was truly eloquent. It

was not mere art, but the natural eloquence of a great man; not mere euphonious sounds, not the eloquence of words, not the eloquence of action: all these were present, but it was the eloquence of thought, of feeling, of truth, of the heart, as well as the tongue, that gave the sermon its astonishing power."

Some one thus describes Dr. Beaumont's manner of preaching:

"His imagination was most fervent and poetic. In his sermons he aimed at simplicity—at being at once understood and felt. He seemed to avoid *mere* doctrinal and metaphysical disquisitions, and to delight to spread before his congregations rich supplies of simple Gospel truths. These he illustrated and enforced with wonderful precision, power, earnestness, and pathos. He touched the innermost recesses of the heart, not only of the poor and simple, but also of the fastidious and refined. His occasional repetition of a sentence was so effectual as to add to its force, frequently to its clearness; and indeed often, from his remarkable manner, this peculiarity had the effect of a commentary or extension of his sentences. We have heard him when he has risen to the very sublime of eloquence, and when he has swayed his fascinated audience as with an enchanter's rod. He knew well when he had reached his height of power in an address, and as the great master-mind he has at such times, by the utterance of a few words, evoked a universal sympathy with his theme, and raised a shout of praise from the excited and delighted

multitudes before him which has been absolutely deafening. Take an instance. He is in one of the largest and finest chapels in the center of England; pews and aisles are crowded with the rich and the poor, with people of refined taste and the vulgar, with all classes of temperament, from the phlegmatic to the emotional. His subject is Matt. xxi, 10: 'Who is this?' Already has he had breathless attention for an hour; he has wrought upon all the feelings of the human breast in his graphic descriptions of the character, and life, and claims of Jesus; every heart has felt the force of truth, and is prepared for any response he may demand. Rapid sentences are uttered, presenting vivid pictures of the march of the procession down the Mount of Olives, across the Valley of Jehoshaphat, over the brook Kedron, up the steep leading into the city; the gathering crowds upon the way, the rising shouts of the rejoicing multitudes reverberating from side to side of the valley; the wonder of the people within the city as the loud hosannas reach them; women looking out from their lattices, and men from the street and walls, in the direction of the sound; and men and women, Pharisees and publicans, rulers and people, exclaiming, as the principal figure in the whole arrests their gaze, 'Who is this?' 'Who is this?' he shouted in reply: 'Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee!' and then, enumerating the principal titles and claims advanced in his discourse, such as 'Jesus, Immanuel, the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace, the Star of Jacob, the Lamb of God, the Friend of

sinners, the Saviour of the world!' he shouted in a still higher strain, '*Halleluia!*' The effect was electrical. 'Halleluia!' thundered the vast congregation, as with one voice. Conscious of the sway he had acquired, again his royal voice rolled forth its power: 'Jesus, Immanuel, the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace, the Star of Jacob, the Lamb of God, the Friend of sinners, the Saviour of the world! Halleluia!' 'Halleluia!' again thundered out the people, and with a voice so deafening as to constrain us to put our fingers into our ears. He was an 'eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures. Acts xviii, 24."

The late Rev. John Trippett, in a letter dated Sheffield, Sept. 3, 1845, says:

"The celebrated Dr. Beaumont, one of the most distinguished preachers in the Wesleyan Connection, preached his valedictory sermon in Brunswick Chapel, Liverpool, on Sunday evening, the 24th ultimo, to a most densely crowded auditory, which he held in almost breathless silence for over an hour.

"This distinguished man has labored for six consecutive years in the far-famed port above mentioned, always drawing vastly crowded houses, which he often electrified, and sometimes almost galvanized, by his powerful and brilliant bursts of eloquence. On the occasion in question we had peal after peal and stroke after stroke of manly oratory, which often caused a singular sensation to steal over the whole frame, as if some magnetic influence passed over the mighty mass of people there assembled.

"It was an interesting occasion. The preacher had a twofold object in view by his subject, which he sustained with singular ability; the one was the benefit of the day, and the Sabbath-schools connected with the circuit; the other, taking leave of an affectionate people, with whom he and his two excellent colleagues had lived in love and harmony for three fleeting years.

"The doctor felt deeply at the time, as a few brief introductory remarks bore ample testimony, while they served to enlist the feelings of the audience in his behalf. His subject was founded on Psalm cxviii, 22, 23, a text which one would suppose not the most appropriate for such an occasion; but he informed his hearers immediately on its announcement that his object was to exhibit before them in his last sermon the *glory* and *exaltation* of his Divine Master, and to have *that* on their minds rather than himself.

"To give a description of the man, and his manner of preaching Christ and him crucified, would not be an easy task. He is about the middle size, and possesses a quick, piercing eye, which seems to take in at one sweep the character of his audience. His mind is rich and fertile, amply stored with science and theological knowledge, which he often blends together most delightfully in many of his sermons; so that while he is highly calculated to rouse, he instructs his audience at the same time.

"His voice, we presume to think, was never one of the most musical, and yet the softer tones are far from being unpleasant. He seems to lift many

of his words from the abdominal muscles, a practice he has probably acquired from having a serious difficulty in articulation, arising from a defect in the palate. The voice passing through this physical difficulty, the higher notes are often extremely harsh, and labor is required to articulate words distinctly; and a full break and a long pause often follow where a stranger would not expect them.

"But aside from these natural defects he possesses the peculiar power, as a public speaker, of rising to the highest and descending to the lowest notes, of any man we ever remember to have heard. When he wishes to press upon the hearts of his hearers some weighty theological truth, his action is most vehement, and he pounds the Bible in a most merciless manner, while the frequent contortions of his body are often painful to the more delicate part of his audience.

"From the great crowds that follow him, and the heated atmosphere in which he is often obliged to preach, together with the highly laborious style of his preaching, he often, perhaps most generally, becomes quite bathed in perspiration, and frequently saturates several pocket-handkerchiefs during one discourse. This he did on the Sabbath evening we had the pleasure of hearing him. Such a man, to preach and labor in such a manner, in an American summer would all but melt away, and would quickly find a premature grave. His name and fame are often trumpeted over the nation in the public prints."

A correspondent of the *North-western Christian Advocate* thus writes concerning Dr. Beaumont:—

"This eminent servant of God was, beyond all doubt, a man of true genius. This was abundantly evident in the originality of his manner, the sparkling freshness of his thoughts, and the burning eloquence of his words. He was of the *genus* of Chalmers and Irving; but he nevertheless imitated no preacher, living or dead; and yet, in the soundness, simplicity, and vividness of his discourses, he shone, not with the erratic glare of a meteor, but with the steady luster of a planet. As a preacher, he rarely, if ever, left the great central truths of the Christian system, but urged their doctrines with a force, and life, and vehemence not often witnessed. His natural eloquence frequently approached the rapturous and the sublime. In private, as well as in official, life he was genial, generous, and liberal; and he cultivated the most friendly relations toward other denominations of Christians. If he had a fault, it was that of too compassionate a heart, and that he formed too noble an estimate of his fellow-men."

The following is from "The Lamps of the Temple; Shadows from the Lights of the Modern Pulpit;" a work published in London in 1852, giving a description of some of the most splendid pulpit orators of the age—the gifted Thomas Binney, the elegant Henry Melville, the gorgeous Richard Winter Hamilton, the profound James Parsons, the scholastic John Cumming, the eloquent Rob-

ert Newton and Dr. Joseph Beaumont. Speaking of him, the author says:—

"A review of the pulpit oratory of England would be very incomplete, however, that did not present something more even than a passing notice of Dr. Beaumont. There are few towns in England where his voice has not been heard, and the style of his oratory, alike in its verbal and oral characteristics, is very peculiar. No style can be conceived better calculated to impress and to arouse a vast popular audience. He reminds us, in many particulars, of Robert Hall's description of Toller of Kettering: 'The simple declaration of the truth, of truth of infinite moment, borne in upon the heart by a mind intensely alive to its grandeur. Criticism was disarmed; the hearer felt himself elevated to a region which it could not penetrate. All was powerless submission to the master of the scene.' All that can be said of Beaumont's preaching is, that it exhibits a heart all alive, full of honest and of noble impulses, and deriving additional power from the charms of a peculiarly well-furnished and observant mind—a mind awake to every kind of beauty—an eye kindling with rapture at every scenic impression—a memory well-furnished with the stores of historical anecdote, or scientific allusion, or the graces of verbal elegance and diction.

"The preaching of Dr. Beaumont is wonderfully calculated for extensive popularity. He will ever be a popular minister who is able to interpret, by analogy, his meaning; and Dr. Beaumont is the very prince of analogical preachers. His figures

abound throughout his discourses, but they are not mere tropes of speech; they are at once graphic delineations, and perfect symbols. You feel that you understand the subject better by them, that they indeed form a part of the subject; that they are the body, containing the soul, of the discourse.

"Our preacher has delighted us, has instructed us, has elevated us; but we have ever thought of him as we indeed could conceive him, and as we have heard of him; for he can raise a tempest, or hush it into silence. His power is great; he can breathe out his pure, beautiful, quiet, and blessed sentences and emotions and figures softly as a summer gale at twilight, or he can hurry his words along, and brood over the pulpit like a very storm-spirit, while every breast heaves beneath the volumes of his power. We have been pleased to notice too—for we have seen him upon some such occasions—that the moments of the greatest rapture and passion in the minds of the audience are those when he is most collected. He just hovers and flutters above the people like an eagle dipping his wings in the sunny cloud or rainbow; or, if you prefer the simpler figure, say, a skylark skirting the fringe of the distant cloud; every eye is upturned to the distant wing; you hear the voice, you see the wing up there—there, beating about in the deep blue of the heavens, a thing of glory and beauty. Will it pass out of sight? will it enter the infinite and travel away? Wildly, wildly wanders the winged voice; breathless is the silence as the notes flow on; it is rapture, rapture; for it is nature flying to

the bosom of the Father and the God; and suddenly you are relieved, for the beautiful singer is on the sward, in the nest, at home. So suddenly does our speaker in his best flights drop from the most elevated regions, releasing his audiences from the deep and wrapt attention with which they had followed him in his flight.

"After these remarks, then, it is almost unnecessary to say, Dr. Beaumont is a glorious platform speaker, for his humor is happy, and flows along cheerfully without a ripple or a current.

"Dr. Beaumont is singularly felicitous as a platform speaker; yet he is almost the only speaker whose style upon the platform does not materially differ from the style of the pulpit—the same love of the play of fancy, the same proneness to anecdote and illustration; he plays over his auditors not like forked, but like sheet lightning; you see power, but power in perfect good humor; there is no strut, no attempt, no cant; all is so easy and natural, and yet the voice rises and rolls; for, whatever we may say about impediments, it has compass, and, as the lightning plays, it brings innumerable things to light—dews hanging upon the petals of flowers, or raindrops trembling on the thorn; brings, at the same time, into bold relief the tall, dark mountains, and makes the stone lying at the foot sparkle with unwonted brilliancy, or lights up with strange loveliness some tarn among the hills, or river winding on its way."

The following is from the "Wesleyan Takings," second volume:

"Power, apart from other considerations, is the leading character of his ministry. When he starts, it gives us the idea of some mighty machinery put in motion: off goes the check—clank go the chains—round go the wheels; all is motion, tremendous power. . . . From the occasional violence of his manner, it is doubtful whether some occupations in manual labor are more laborious exercises than preaching. . . . With his heart deeply affected with the importance of the subject, what the effects of one of those whirlwinds of the soul! . . .

"Though boisterous and vehement in some peculiar moods, yet it is not mere violence. There is real pathos with his strength; and though his hurried thoughts are sometimes like troops that have received marching orders, and have to do all by forced marchings, they pass on with regularity, and are properly supported and attired. . . . The rapidity of his delivery is sometimes occasioned by intense feeling, but more generally by the astonishing flow of his ideas; and although there is an occasional struggle for utterance that would lead a stranger to fear lest he should break the neck of his discourse over a word or thought, he is certain to come down from his heights, and to alight on his feet with the right thought, the proper expression, the entire sentence in the exact place and in regular succession. . . . Away the preacher dashes, like a steam-engine along the line, driving every thing out of sight that is likely to check its impetuous course. . . .

"His intellectual gifts, which, though great, are

not in the highest sense gigantic, and which are rather robust than purely elegant or strictly metaphysical, naturally influence his oratory; and though he does not affect argument in debate so much as hard, knock-down blows, yet he is always effective. If possible, he is still more effective on the platform than in the pulpit. . . .

"In debate he is prompt, noble, fearless, independent, and always on the liberal side of the house. Some of his more sententious remarks, on these occasions, are perfect gems, sparkling with light; ingots of gold, which might be hoarded up for their value. But he more frequently rolls with the thunder, and flashes with the lightning; especially when assailed under the influence of 'the platform.'

"Dr. Beaumont's power over a congregation is, without exception, beyond that of any other man in the Wesleyan body. His impassioned eloquence, and the profusion of intellectual wealth which he invariably exhibits in his sermons, draw immense crowds to the chapel where he officiates.

"He was preaching at the opening of a new chapel at Londonderry, Ireland. His talents attracted the attention of one of the Irish bishops, who listened with the deepest attention to his discourse, and officiated as a collector on the occasion.

"At the Wesleyan Conference in Manchester, in 1841, Dr. Beaumont preached in Oldham-street Chapel one Sabbath morning. The chapel was crowded to excess, but the clock struck twelve before he seemed to rise above his feelings and

obtain the proper mastery over his subject, which led him to say, 'But I suppose I must conclude, as our time is nearly gone.' Instantly, one spontaneous burst from the congregation, who had been hanging upon his lips in a way of which he had not been sensible, was heard—'Go on, go on!' It was like electricity; and he responded, 'I will go on, then, at your bidding.' He proceeded with unusual freedom till one o'clock, expatiating on, 'O Lord, revive thy work,' the countenances of the people meanwhile beaming with delight. It was, indeed, an extraordinary scene, and a season of power."

When opening a beautiful chapel at Grove-place, in Jersey, he preached two edifying sermons; that in the forenoon was from 1 Tim. ii, 8, "I will, therefore, that men pray every-where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." The theme was public prayer. In his usual impressive manner he explained and enforced its duties. He finally adverted to the posture in use among the early Christians of "lifting up holy hands," and after lengthily expounding why, after six days' defilement with meddling with things of the world, the hands should be *washed* before they could be clean or "holy," he rebukingly spoke of the very unseemly posture of modern Christians in *sitting* during the offering of public prayer. He also reminded his hearers, in a tone of touching beauty, of the custom (as related by the historians of the Church) of *all the people* joining in the rehearsal of public devotion, and the peculiar euphony of

the united exclamation of a vast congregation while repeating the *Amen*, which fell on the ear like the sound of "many waters."

It would be scarce possible or prudent to hazard a circumstantial account of the evening sermon, or, indeed, of any of his sermons. The extraordinary flow of language, the multiform and varied imagery, the heights and depths, the lengths and breadths, of fervid thought, the mellifluous cadences, the impassioned gesture, the challenging tone, and, above all, the *earnestness* manifested in the delivery, will invariably remain imprinted on the memory.

Rev. James Caughey, the eminent revivalist, was welcomed in England by Dr. Beaumont, and they fought side by side the battles of the Lord. Mr. Caughey thus speaks of the Doctor: "My acquaintance with Dr. Beaumont commenced in Liverpool, October, 1843, when during four or five months we had thirteen hundred sinners converted and four hundred believers purified. He is a noble man and an eloquent preacher. I heard him deliver in Hull a rich and beautiful discourse—'apples of gold in pictures of silver,' masses of sterling thoughts like ingots of gold, yet simple and easy of comprehension, full of beauty and power.

> 'His words bore sterling weight, nervous and strong;
> In manly tides of sense they rolled along.'

He is exceedingly happy in his choice of words, which come like nimble servants at his bidding. His power of iteration, or reiteration, struck us as singular—piling sentence upon sentence, expression

upon expression, word upon word, syllable upon syllable, epithet upon epithet, and all to glorify some *noun* or other, and that noun illustrative of something higher and nobler. There is something in it like comparative *tautology*, it is true. There is the same meaning expressed in different words —therefore hazardous to a speaker. Not so with Dr. Beaumont. To the hearer there is no *needless repetition;* he would not have a single word absent; wishes him to go on *piling!* for he feels the main thought—*the* thought—sinking deeper and deeper into his heart. It is like the repeated strokes of a hammer upon the same nail.

"What one said of a famous orator and statesman is truly applicable to Dr. Beaumont, for he does possess that *masculine vigor and full grown robustness of mind* with an equally *diffused intellectual* wealth. In private intercourse you can see nothing of the great man, but the social, unassuming Christian friend, happy himself, and making every body easy and happy around him." *

"Dr. Beaumont was one of the most eminent preachers in the Methodist Church in England. His preaching was characterized by brilliancy of illustration, by repeated bursts of impassioned eloquence, and an earnestness of manner and delivery often amounting to impetuosity. For many years he was one of the most popular pulpit and platform speakers in Great Britain." †

* Caughey's "Earnest Christianity."

† M'Clintock and Strong's "Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature."

The Rev. John Bowers, himself an eloquent preacher and no mean judge of oratory, gives in his testimony. Beaumont and he were received into Conference at the same time; at one time they were colleagues, and they were life-time friends.

Mr. Bowers, after speaking of the "noble nature and transcendent talents" of Dr. Beaumont, says: "His habits were very studious, and his preparations for the pulpit were made with great care. His sermons were often written at full length, and were delivered with energy and unction. With respect to the ability, the earnestness, the fidelity and brilliancy of his ministry, others will testify who are more competent to do it justice than I can pretend to be, for it requires the hand of an Apolles to paint an Achilles. Can I ever forget that countenance, that beamed with benevolence and brightened with intelligence, or that voice, whose every word was music to my heart? I admired and loved Dr. Beaumont while living; his name is to me as ointment poured forth, and his memory 'is a joy forever.' His equal I never knew, and never expect to know, till mortality is swallowed up of life."

Mr. Bowers then speaks of a sermon he heard Dr. Beaumont preach in the presence of thousands who thronged Exeter Hall August 31, 1851. He says, "I can never forget the beautiful and eloquent strains in which he expatiated on the works of God in connection with the works of man then in course of exhibition in the Crystal Palace, from the words of the Psalmist, "For thou, Lord, hast

made me glad through thy work. I will triumph in the works of thy hands." It was an outburst of pent-up fires, a glorious emanation of light and life. I have heard great and good men, and marked their distinctive excellences, but I never knew the elements and evidences of emotional, rhetorical, and spiritual superiority so clustered and comprehended as in him. His name is enshrined in unnumbered hearts, and is graven on eternal tablets."

It will be a source of pleasure to the reader to know that the sermon so splendidly eulogized by Rev. Mr. Bowers is in the volume before him. It abounds with brilliant passages. The introduction is surpassingly beautiful. From the very commencement the orator moves upward like the sun, climbing toward its meridian. He begins thus:

"In these soul-breathing productions of the man after God's own heart, what a richness, fullness, powerfulness we find! So much so that the sweet singer of Israel shall be singer for us; and when we want apt words for apt places, choice sentences for choice sentiments, we will cull them from this inimitable legend, the Psalter of David."

There was a period when Robert Newton and Joseph Beaumont were the most popular ministers in the Wesleyan Connection, each preaching to crowds, and each receiving the laudations of the multitudes. They were alike, however, in nothing save the magnetic power of their eloquence: their styles differed greatly. The reader will find

the contrast here drawn between them, "which we regard as ably done."

"For many years Dr. Newton and Dr. Beaumont were the pulpit celebrities of the Wesleyan Church. True, there were also other popular preachers; but these two, like Cicero and Demosthenes, were confessedly the master-spirits. As we occasionally heard both at a period of life when we were enthusiastic admirers of pulpit talent, in fact, hero-worshipers, the following parallel will exhibit their points of similarity and dissimilarity, as they did and do still appear to us. Newton was graceful, Beaumont was powerful; Newton charmed, Beaumont thrilled. Newton affected your feelings by his strokes of tenderness; Beaumont electrified you by his powerful genius. Newton was a perfect orator, attracting and delighting all classes by his gracefulness, naturalness, and majesty; Beaumont had blemishes which at once attracted attention, yet, strange as it may seem, the impediment added a wonderful variation to his tone, and even heightened the interest of the whole. Newton's style was easy, flowing, logical, and homely, with occasional touches of pathos and sublimity; Beaumont's was copious, polished, affluent, buoyant, unexpected, and brilliant. Newton was seen, Beaumont was felt. Newton might recall Cicero, who never entirely lost sight of himself; Beaumont reminded you of Demosthenes, in his occasional vehemence and perfect *abandonment* to his theme. Newton was the great orator, taking the term to include all

essential excellences, exclusive of defects; but, if we take persuasion as the prime notion of eloquence, Beaumont, without doubt, had greatly the superiority. Newton had the advantage in person—he had limbs like a gladiator, a shining eye, apostolic head, swan-like grace of gesture, and a voice like the fine tones of an organ; Beaumont had the superiority in scholastic culture, susceptible temperament, and in the gift of *genius*, which in its nature dwarfs the most towering talents. Newton enticed us onward by his bewitching oratory; Beaumont hurried us along with a vehement impetuosity. Newton gently touched the springs of feeling; Beaumont made them gush like so many fountains. Newton occasionally warmed and became energetic, but never, properly speaking, *impassioned*—never rode upon the whirlwind; Beaumont often did, causing thunder, lightning, and rain. But we cannot, no man can, describe it, for, as Robert Hall has said, '*You cannot paint eloquence.*'" *

The following description of the preaching of Dr. Beaumont is from the *Glasgow Examiner:*

"St. Thomas's Church, Gallowgate, Glasgow, has recently been taken by the Wesleyans, and opened by Dr. Beaumont. The discourse, from 1 Tim. iv, 6–10, for richness and variety of illustration was one of great excellence. The preacher never seemed at a loss for a comparison or a simile. Now one was culled from the sacred pages, again one was taken from natural history, then from science

* "A Biographical and Critical Sketch of Dr. Beaumont, the Eloquent Orator." By the Rev. Richard Wrench, London.

and from the arts; the morning and the evening, the Alps and the Himalayas, the level plains, the jungle and the prairies, sacred and profane biography, all furnished material with a readiness and profusion which has scarcely any parallel in Scottish preaching; indeed, they came, as it were, crowding upon him, so that the hearer felt that the one expressed was the first that had come to hand from a hundred similar ones the preacher had at his command. His language, also, was equally profuse. It seemed to flow spontaneously, leaving not the slightest impression that it had been previously selected and arranged in its present form. This ease and fluency are a characteristic of English preaching, and is very marked in this preacher. However, though this is certainly very pleasing at the moment, it has the tendency to detract from the definiteness of an exposition. The form is lost in the richness of the coloring, and the eye is dazzled more than the mind is enlightened. We are, however, not saying this in disparagement of this preacher. He is an excellent and substantial preacher, possessing a masculine mind, thoroughly conversant with the Scriptures, and stored with a large amount of knowledge of a miscellaneous description. He also possesses a warm temperament, and displays great earnestness and fervor in all the exercises, both devotional and didactic. There is with him no formal utterance, but he enters into the work with heart and spirit, as one who knows from experience the joys and consolations that true religion affords, and who is anxious

that others should share them also. Either in things sacred or civil, we could not think of such a man allying himself with the selfish or tyrannical. His fame as a preacher does not lie in gracefulness of gesture or speech, but in the quality of his matter and the earnestness of his appeals. His voice is strong, and varies from deep, grave tones to a high pitch, shrill and rapid; and occasionally, when he wishes to lay peculiar emphasis upon a word, he sounds it out to a great length. His brow is of capacious dimensions, and is but partially concealed with thin locks of a light yellow hue. He is undoubtedly a minister of whom any denomination of Christians might be proud, and whom all should respect as well for his becoming walk and conversation as for the extent of his attainments and the zeal with which he prosecutes his mission."

The following brief portraiture of Dr. Beaumont is by one who knew him well. He says he can only draw upon himself in endeavoring to bring out the living, breathing portrait of him who, though "being dead, yet speaketh," a portrait which has been hung in the chambers of the mind for a series of years.

"Dr. Beaumont's style was peculiarly his own. It was very different from the highly gifted and apostolic Chalmers, or the eloquent Edward Irving. He clothed his discourses in rare, appropriate, and beautiful words. He enlightened his audiences by the justness of his sentiments, while they were pleased with the brilliancy of his imagination and the copiousness of his language.

"His sermons were distinguished not only for their fine evangelical tone, but for an affluence of diction, a splendor of coloring, and a beauty of imagery, combined with a gush of rich, hallowed feeling peculiar to himself.

"With him, dissemination of truth from the pulpit was a kind of enthusiasm. He was endowed with genius. His amazing power in the pictorial enabled him to throw off a subject, in a mental vision, with all the power and coloring with which a first-rate artist might present one to the bodily sight. As a powerful and varied painter in words he stood pre-eminent in the Wesleyan body.

"A Milton, a Cromwell, a Hampden would have envied the brilliancy of imagination and the splendor of imagery which he displayed. We were now and then reminded of Jeremy Taylor, and anon he carried his hearers to the third heavens, then flinging out great masses of thought, and these delightfully relieved by bold and beautiful figures. Imagination was one of those faculties which was always present, whether discoursing in public or in private. The impression bore an affinity very often to that of a traveler passing through a country in the midst of the verdure of spring, the flowers of summer and the fruit of autumn, distinguished for bold rock and beautiful scenery, in the course of which the hearers were not in the first instance so much impressed with the whole as with detached parts, when finally the entire scene revolved in the mind and passed before it like a panoramic exhibition. It was this delight-

ful variety which fascinated the heart and fixed the eye upon the preacher. His descriptive powers were beyond most of his pulpit contemporaries.

"The leading characteristic of his ministry was power. He threw his whole soul into the work. There was real pathos, and his hurried thoughts were sometimes like troops that had received marching orders, and had to do all by forced marches. His eloquence was fervent, rapid, and copious, carrying along with it the minds and hearts of his audiences." *

His brethren of the Wesleyan Conference, of which Dr. Beaumont was so long an honored member, speak of him in the Minutes of 1855 as "eloquent and popular," characterized by general felicity and frequent brilliancy of illustration, by repeated bursts of impassioned eloquence, and an earnest manner of delivery, often amounting to impetuosity, which produced a vivid impression on the audiences. It is not surprising, therefore, that his services were in request as an occasional preacher and an advocate of various benevolent institutions, and to these purposes they were cheerfully devoted, without regard to personal convenience, and in a catholic spirit. In all this class of labors he was truly more abundant; and his ministry on those occasions, as well as in its ordinary exercise, a blessing to many."

He was stationed in Hull in 1854, in accordance with the expressed wish of the people. His health was enfeebled, and yet he was in labors more abun-

* From a funeral sermon by Rev. James Everett.

dant. He grew old gracefully, and became more mellow as the autumn of life approached. He retained his popularity to the last, preaching with pathos, power, and success. The last fourteen days of his life he preached fourteen times.

On the last day (Sunday) of 1854 he preached in the morning from the words, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been;" at the watch-night from "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." Again he preached from, "Redeeming the time."

Dr. Beaumont said to a friend a few days before he died, "To die in the pulpit is the most glorious death a preacher can have, and no man can desire anything happier." He could hardly have supposed when he said this that such a death awaited him; and yet it was not long before this desire was literally realized.

His last sermon was preached on Friday, at Newland, a short distance from Hull. Sunday morning, January 21, 1855, he went to the house of the Lord prepared to preach from the seven first verses of the seventy-eighth Psalm. The morning was cold, the streets were slippery; he walked, with the support of one of his daughters, to Waltham-street Chapel. He entered the pulpit and began the service with much solemnity. The first hymn he selected commences thus:—

"Eternal Power, whose high abode
Becomes the grandeur of a God—
Infinite lengths, beyond the bounds
Where stars revolve their little rounds:

He did not read the first verse, but gave out the first two lines of the second :—

> "Thee while the first archangel sings,
> He hides his face behind his wings."

He read with amazing pathos.

The audience sang these lines, and were expecting him to read the others; he looked partially around, and then fell; "he was not, for God took him." Suddenly he went from the sanctuary on earth to the sanctuary in heaven—

> "His body with his charge laid down,
> And ceased at once to work and live."

It was like a translation, as Enoch's or Elijah's. His sudden death produced a wonderful consternation. His family were shocked; it was so with the congregation, with the community, with the country. Multitudes attended his funeral, and a very impressive sermon was preached by Dr. James Dixon, his intimate friend, from the following appropriate text: "An eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures."

Devout men made great lamentation over him, and buried him in the Hull Cemetery, where he will rest until the multitude of sleepers shall start at the sound of the trumpet and rise to life immortal.

> "See truth, love, and mercy, in triumph descending,
> And nature all glowing with Eden's first bloom;
> On the cold cheek of death smiles and roses are blending,
> And beauty immortal awakes from the tomb."

# SERMONS

OF

# REV. JOSEPH BEAUMONT, M. D.

# SERMONS.

## I.

### THE MORE EXCELLENT SACRIFICE.

And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect.—GEN. iv, 4, 5.

By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.—HEB. xi, 4.

Righteous Abel.—MATT. xxiii, 35.

WE love to look back into the dim, misty past—to the root, origin, beginning, of things. When we see a majestic river bearing a nation's commerce on its bosom, we love to trace it up to its source; to go to the foot of the mountain where the dew-drops fall, and a thousand tiny rills mingle and swell, where it is fed by tributary streams, and then trace it onward, deepening and widening as it rolls its mighty volume on and on, forming the high road to the ocean:—

When we see a magnificent palace bearing the impress of age, with its ivy-covered walls, its lofty turrets, its broken columns, though it may now

be a den for wild beasts and a hold for owls and satyrs—still a temple in ruins, bearing indications of its former grandeur, marks of the splendor of its palmy days—we love to learn its origin, to go back to the laying of its foundation, to gather up the circumstances that gave it birth :—

When we survey an empire like Great Britain, with its hundred and fifty millions of population, its laws, its wealth, its institutions, its liberties, its commerce, its churches, its flag floating in every sea, with a dominion on which the sun never sets, sitting queen of the nations—

> "Fairest flower of the isles,
> And first gem of the sea"—

when we survey an empire like this, we love to take the light of history and go back to the few huts that formed its nucleus—to see the giant men that formed its constitution :—and when we view a system like Christianity, that has redeemed us from savage barbarism, snatched millions of immortal minds from hell, constituted them into God's aristocracy and nobility, and with them peopled the very solitudes of heaven, surely we love to mark the rise of this mighty river—to examine the foundation stone of this magnificent structure—to listen to the little band that form the nucleus of this boundless empire! Well, this holy Book takes us back to the FIRST MAN AND WOMAN, the center, origin, root, of all the countless myriads that now people heaven, earth, and hell—To THE FIRST SIN, that is still running like cur-

rents of fire through all the ramifications of humanity—the first sin, that has made the earth heave, surge, groan, and travail together in pain, robbed heaven of some of its brightest ornaments, built the great State prison of hell, kindled its fires, and awakened groans that end not—To THE FIRST PROMISE that came swelling out of the bosom of God—To THE FIRST SAVED SINNER—If you ask me his name, my reply is, *Righteous Abel*—RIGHTEOUS ABEL.

Abel was the second son of the first pair. The first Adam gave him the name of Abel—vanity, or a vanishing vapor—perhaps to teach us that on every thing this side of the throne of God—on man's highest earthly good—is written, Vanity! vanity! THE SECOND ADAM made an addition to his name—Righteous Abel—JUSTIFIED ABEL: that's better than his old name—Vanity. There's something lasting, substantial, in this new name; something that shall live forever.

In bringing before you the character of Abel our attention is required to the following considerations:—

I. He was the first of whom it was affirmed that he was justified by faith.

II. He was the first of whom it was stated that he offered an acceptable sacrifice to God.

III. He was the first personal type of Christ.

IV. He was the first martyr for the truth.

V. He was the first whose redeemed spirit entered heaven.

I. He was the first of whom it was affirmed that

he was justified by faith. Perhaps your minds will turn at once, with intense interest, to Adam and Eve. Were they lost? We do not know. The Bible is silent about them. Paul draws up a chronological list, and goes back along the stream of time from generation to generation till he comes to Abel, and there he stops. By the sin of the first pair the sluices of death were lifted up, and the world deluged with woe and ruin. They were the first to introduce sin into the world; on this account, probably, God has drawn over their destiny the mantle of night. I hope they were saved; they were the first who heard the Gospel, we trust they embraced it, but the silence of death is on their doom. But of Abel it is affirmed that he was justified by faith. Then the devil didn't have the first; then before the howl was heard in hell, the shout of victory was heard in heaven.

On the same day that man sinned, redemption was introduced; for we are told that in the cool of the day the Lord God walked in the garden, and said, the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. The sun, then, never set upon man after his fall till God's new method of mercy was proclaimed to him.

Justified by Faith. How can man be saved? or, How can a sinner be justified before God? are questions all important. Men have proposed five ways for saving men's souls:—

1. By the law of works; or the moral of obedience.

2. By works of supererogation, including voluntary sufferings, rigid discipline, austerities, uncom-

manded mortifications, patient endurance of the miseries attendant upon human life.

3. Penal sufferings, such as purgatorial fires.

4. Transmigration of souls.

5. By the mere benevolence of God.

All these are miserable subterfuges, lying refuges. But from the beginning God has proclaimed ONE WAY—salvation by faith. Here are two men—two representative men—that stand at the head of two great classes—Deists, and believers in the atonement of Christ: those who regard God as a great moral governor, and depend upon their own merit for acceptance, and those who look for salvation through the blood of Christ. Abel looked at the struggling lamb before him as a picture of something to come—a type of another scene—the crucifixion. His faith looked through the mist of four thousand years at God's Lamb. He leaned on him, trusted in him, embraced him, and was saved. Sight can reach a long way, up to some of those globes of light untold millions of miles distant. Reason can go beyond sight. If premises are laid down, it can arrive at deductions and conclusions. But, O! what a mighty principle faith is! It can pass beyond sight and reason; it can pierce the vail that hangs between time and eternity; it can bring into one burning focus earth, heaven, and hell—the past, the present, and the future! Abel looked four thousand years ahead and saw a *cross*—A CROSS! a great, burning cross, and clung to it and lived. Abel was the first, but, thank God! he was not the last. Abraham, David, Paul, the Wesleys,

and thousands more, have successively been great teachers of this wonder-working faith. Abel stands at the head of countless multitudes who have embraced the faith. Since the days of Abel, perhaps, there has not elapsed an hour of time but some poor sinner, somewhere or another, has found his way to the cross. There has been a glorious succession of justified persons. Around this doctrine of justification by faith stand millions of witnesses; witnesses that the way to God is by the way of the cross.

If I am addressing any who are seeking salvation by works, let me say, You have a hard task. Can you make an atonement? Can you repair the breach? Can you provide salvation? You are not called upon to make an atonement, but to believe in one; not to provide salvation, but to receive it—"all things are ready." Faith, simple faith, is the condition. And what is faith? Why, just the echo of God's voice: an echo does not add anything to the voice—it repeats back the words again. Faith does not add any thing to the truth, it repeats it. God says to us, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Faith says back again to God, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Say, then, with the poet,

"He ever lives above,
For me to intercede,
His all-redeeming love,
His precious blood, to plead.
His blood atoned for all our race,
And sprinkles now the throne of grace."

Say again—

> "'Tis done; thou dost this moment save—
> With full salvation bless;
> Redemption through thy blood I have,
> And spotless love and peace."

Can you make a stone roll up the hill? Can you make a stream roll up the mountain's side? Can you roll back the tide of the ocean? As soon can you do this as secure salvation, get salvation, by works.

II. Abel was the first of whom it was stated that he offered an acceptable sacrifice to God. Some are of opinion that sacrifices had their origin in the customs of heathen nations, and others believe that sacrifices are of divine appointment. The latter opinion has our approval, because at a very early period we find that the skins of animals were used as clothing. As animal food was not then eaten, we conclude that these skins were from animals that had been offered in sacrifice. And then the whole tenor of revelation represents sacrifices as pleasing to God. We can only account for sacrifices at this early period of the world's history on the ground that they were of divine appointment. Abel, however, was the first of whom it was stated, he offered an acceptable sacrifice to God. Come, then, and see these two altars.

Cain brought of the fruits of the ground, and Abel of the firstlings of his flock; and God had respect unto Abel and to his offering, but unto Cain and his offering he had not respect.

To Abel's offering he testified his approval. In what manner he bore his testimony is not stated. Some suppose that a voice was heard; others, that a bright light hovered over the spot; but others entertain on opinion that fire from heaven came down and consumed the sacrifice. This latter opinion is probably the correct one, as it harmonizes with the method by which God testified his approval in later times. See, then, this pious young man standing by the altar presenting his sacrifice. "O God! who made us, and who breathed the breath of life into our nostrils: who hath blessed us, and spared us despite our sin, thy justice is tempered with mercy! Sole Lord of light, of good, glory, and eternity, accept from thy first of shepherds the first born of the flock; in itself nothing, but still a type of the one great sacrifice to come. Thou canst, thou wilt, thou dost accept; the fire from heaven kindles, the flame ascends, God testifies of his gift."

And if Cain brought strange fire to consume his offering, who shall say but the fire of heaven scattered the sacrifice and scorched the unhallowed offerer, as he fled from the presence of the Lord?

A question of considerable importance here arises. Why did God accept the one and reject the other? We reply,

1. *The men differed in character.* God had respect unto Abel, as well as to his offering; but unto Cain and his offering he had not respect. Not that there was any dark interdict in the book against Cain; not that Abel was a favorite, irre-

spective of his conduct—for God is no respecter of persons—but one was doing the will of God, and the other following the dictates of his own will. In our approaches to God there must be a sincere desire to serve him. These men differed in their characters. Here was, at an early date, the publican and the Pharisee.

2. *They differed in the mode of their approach to God.* They both built altars, both presented a sacrifice; but one came in the constitutional, the heaven-appointed, way—the way by sacrifice. Cain brought of the fruit of the ground; he recognized God as the author or governor of the world, but seemed to exclude the atonement. Abel came by the way of the cross, through the blood of Jesus.

3. *They differed in the principles from which they acted.* It is expressly said of Abel, that by faith he offered a more acceptable sacrifice. Abel's faith, we apprehend, had a special reference to the atonement of Christ. His lamb was but a picture of God's Lamb. There is no way to God but by Christ. Now Cain seemed to lack this one item: he lacked penitence of soul, and faith in Christ's atonement. Cain must have believed in the existence of God or he would have offered no sacrifice. He must have believed in the government and providence of God, as he, by his sacrifice, recognized his dependence upon him; but it does not appear that he had any faith in the new method—in the way by sacrifice—the blood and atonement of Christ. Abel was the first, but not the last—sacrifices in

millions followed. And what were these sacrifices intended to teach? Why, they were as so many millions of finger-posts pointing the world on to the Comer—the One Sacrifice—the Sacrifice offered on the cross. They terminated here. The crucifixion of Christ was on the Jewish great day of atonement. About three o'clock the Saviour died; that would be about the time the Jewish high-priest was offering up the evening sacrifice in the holy of holies. Just then the vail of the temple was rent from the top to the bottom. The voice seemed to say to the priest, "Go! thy work is done!—the Great Sacrifice is on the altar of Calvary once for all!" Henceforth the fire on the altars went out, and sacrifices ceased. Though the Great Sacrifice has been offered up once for all, the doctrine of sacrifices still continues. And now we are not required to bring our sacrifices. We have a Sacrifice and an altar, and to that altar we bring ourselves, our talents, our wealth, our good deeds, and our bad deeds—the one to be accepted, the other to be pardoned; for our very tears need washing—our well-meant efforts can only be accepted as they are offered in the name of Jesus. But what is a sacrifice? It is giving up something that will put us to some inconvenience.

Christ gave up his life—his soul. Shall we not, then, be willing to give, not only out of our abundance, but give a sacrifice toward accomplishing the end for which he died?

III. Abel was the first personal type of Christ.

God has laid the universe under contribution to bring out the Saviour to the view of sinners —*sacred things*, *sacred places*, and *sacred persons.* When you look at the bread on your tables, you are reminded of Him who is the Bread of Life—on the Lamb that sports and gambols in the field. Your mind turns to God's Lamb—the Lamb that takes away the sin of the world. In the early dawn, when the morning star gleams on your path, your attention is turned to Him who is the Bright and Morning Star. When the sun rises up in the heavens, scattering the gloom of night, you think of Him who is the Sun of Righteousness, who shall rise over the nations of the earth with healing in his wings. In the list of personal types you have Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, David, Solomon. But Abel was the first. You cannot think of Abel's devoted life, his persecution, his tragical death,without turning to similar scenes in the Saviour's life, his temptations in the wilderness, his tragic death on Calvary. We are not called upon now to be types; but we are called upon to be epistles—representatives. Let us see that our epistles be not bleared and blotted, and that our lives and tongues bear a faithful testimony to Him.

IV. Abel was the first martyr for the truth. He stands at the head of an illustrious, and all but countless, multitude. He died a martyr for the truth.

The hatred of Cain was aroused because his own offering was rejected and his brother's accepted.

Abel was a martyr, then, for the doctrine of justification by faith. He was a martyr for the truth; he was the first that entered into rest through the rugged portals of martyrdom. You need not pity the martyr—the martyr's crown will compensate for the martyr's death. Since Abel, how has the number swelled! What forms of torture and death have they not endured! In the list is found—Perished in loathsome, noisome dungeons; devoured by wild beasts; tortured in the skins of animals; sawn asunder; broken on the wheel; torn limb from limb; burned at the stake—yes, millions have gone up in the flame-shroud to their rest! To banish, imprison, hang, starve, and burn men for religion is not the Gospel of Christ; it is the gospel of the devil. Where persecution begins Christianity ends. We know the origin of it—it is from the devil; he began the practice in the first family on earth; Abel was the first victim. Since then the persecuting spirit has never slumbered. But, if time had permitted, we would have referred you more fully to the ten fierce persecutions. The first was under the Emperor Nero, thirty-one years after our Lord's ascension. Multitudes were apprehended; they were covered by the skins of wild beasts, torn to pieces by devouring dogs, fastened to crosses, wrapped up in combustible garments that, when the daylight failed, they might, like torches, serve to dispel the gloom of night. For this tragical scene Nero lent his own gardens; and thus the shrieks of women burning to ashes supplied music and diversion for their

circus. The second was under Domitian, in the year 95, and forty thousand are supposed to have perished. The third began in the third year of Trojan, in the year 100. The fourth was under Antoninus. The fifth began in the year 127, under Servitus, when great cruelties were committed. The sixth began in the reign of Maximus, in 235–7. The seventh, which was the most dreadful ever known, began in 250, under the Emperor Decius. The eighth began in 257, under Valerian. The ninth was under Aurelian, in 274. The tenth began in the nineteenth year of Dioclesian, in 303. In this dreadful persecution, which lasted ten years, houses filled with Christians were set on fire, and whole droves twisted together with ropes and cast into the sea. It is related that seventeen thousand were slain in one month. In this fiery persecution it is believed that not less than one hundred and forty-four thousand Christians died by violence, besides seven hundred thousand that died through the banishments or the public works to which they were condemned; and since then, the number of Christians martyred by those bearing the same name is all but countless. It has been said that not less than fifty millions of Protestants, at different times, have been put to death by Papists. What an army! What seas of blood have been shed! If their bodies were piled in one heap, they would be bigger than any mountain in this world. And now they are seen occupying a distinguished position in the Church above. The Apocalyptic angel turned

John's attention to this mighty army. "What are these?" said he. "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Then the martyr owes his crown to the blood of the Lamb. Then

> "Crown him, ye martyrs of our God,
> Who from his altar call;
> Bring forth the Stem of Jesse's Rod,
> And crown him Lord of all."

Let us thank God for the times in which we live. Let us join the army of martyrs to crown him—*crown him*—CROWN HIM LORD OF ALL.

V. We come, lastly, to observe that—ABEL WAS THE FIRST WHOSE REDEEMED SPIRIT ENTERED HEAVEN. We have asked you to stand by his altar; now come and stand by his tomb. His life was short, his death was early, his struggle was fierce; but liberty, victory, came at last. He takes a last pensive view of all that's dear to him on earth. He enters the chariot—he ascends—the new inhabitant of heaven ascends—beauteous—beauteous as the setting stars that fade away into the light of dawning day. Hail him, ye chiming spheres! Hail him!—hail him, ye globes of light! Hail him, ye morning stars! He ascends; myriads of angels await him. He ascends; the New Jerusalem comes into view—

> "Heaven opens on his eyes; his ears
> With sounds seraphic ring."

He wants to speed his way. Hear him—

> "Lend, lend your wings! I mount! I fly!
> O grave, where is thy victory?
> O death, where is thy sting?"

He passes in triumph the crystal portals. *What must the effect have been upon himself as he looks back* over life's rough voyage?—the stormy Jordan—the fierce conflicts—the victory. *He looks around* on the almost terrifying glories, on the hierarchies of heaven, as they rise rank above rank. The weary traveler had reached home. The soldier had put off the corslet and the helmet. The prodigal had crossed the threshold of his father's mansion. He had reached the goal of his highest ambition: he was in heaven, and eternal sunshine was settling on his brow. He looked down the vista of eternity, and a glorious future was before him. The scene must have been almost overwhelming. But there he was, a lonely spirit. None around him could sympathize with him: none had suffered, none had wept, none had bled, none had died. There he was, a stranger from a strange world. *There!*—THERE he is! that solitary redeemed spirit standing before the throne, pouring out his sweet but lonely song. The harps of heaven are all hushed—the songs all suspended. Seraphim and cherubim bend from their thrones, and all the hierarchies gather round him. *Silence is in heaven.* But, hark! hark! the lonely voice swells on the breeze:—"Unto Him" (as he points to the throne of the Redeemer) "Unto

Him that loved me, and washed me in his own blood, be riches, and strength, and wisdom, and blessing, and honor. Amen and amen."

O, how these notes float, and swell, and echo, and reverberate through the world of light! It was the first song sung by a redeemed spirit. Halleluia!

2. *What effect did it produce on the angels?* Here was a wonder in heaven—a sinner saved, one from another race. Here was a scene that brought out new and startling views of the Divine character; that developed new attributes in the Deity; that placed every person in the Godhead in a new light. There is joy in the presence of God over one sinner that repenteth. Here was a theme for angels to study.

3. *What must the Father have felt?* There had been a fearful problem before the universe, "How can a sinner be saved?" and it had been solved. God's great plan had come out, and it was the great work of God.

> "'Twas great to speak a world from naught!
> 'Twas *greater* to redeem!"

Here was the first-fruits; here was the first prodigal returning to his father. Did he not run to meet him? did he not fall on his neck and kiss him, saying, "This my son was dead and is alive, was lost and is found?" Did he not—the Great Father—say to his angel-brethren, "Bring the best robe and put it on him, and come and make merry?"

4. *What did the Son feel?* Here was the first gem in his crown; the first fruit of his passion; the first trophy of his cross. As the Saviour looked from the heights of his everlasting dwelling-place, he saw the human shrine he should wear, the stable of Bethlehem, the wilderness of temptation, the garden of agony, the hall of condemnation, the Calvary of tragic death. But here was the joy that was set before him; here was the first saved sinner, nestling by his side—sheltering in the cleft of the Rock. He was the first, but not the last. Many since then have gone up within the vail. Some of our friends are among the number; and we have sometimes murmured, and been half ready to think that God has dealt hardly with us. A little boy once went out in the early morn, and was greatly delighted with the little globes formed by the dew on the brambles. He hastened back, and led his father out to see those miniature worlds; but when the father and son arrived the sun was up, and had drawn up, in vapor, the globes that had hung on the brambles, and so displeased the child. He cried, and said, "The angry sun has taken them all up." The father looked up, and saw the beautiful rainbow on the bosom of the cloud, and said, "There, my child, the sun has taken up the bramble globes, and they help to form that beautiful bow on the cloud." Ah! my friends, God has taken up some of our friends; and have we not murmured? But where are they? Ah! do they not form the beautiful bow round the throne of God? Well, they

are constantly going up. They come from the east, the west, the north, and the south. The gates are not shut at all by day, and there is no night there. The number is increasing. In the days of John no man could number them; and since the days of John myriads upon myriads have passed up, and entered in. The multitude is still increasing; the song is swelling into a louder chorus; and what shall it be when all shall be gathered home? O, how it sweetens heaven to remember that we have some there we love! and even while we tabernacle here, we seem to hear their voices lingering still on our ears—we seem to feel their spirits hovering nigh us. They are engraven on the tablets of our memory; in the light of morn, and noon, and dewy eve, they linger still among us. In the beautiful words of the poet—

"When the hours of day are numbered,
And the voices of the night
Wake the better soul that slumbered
To a holy, calm delight;

"Ere the ev'ning lamps are lighted,
And, like phantoms grim and tall,
Shadows from the fitful fire-light
Dance upon the parlor wall—

"Then the forms of the departed
Enter at the open door;
The beloved—the true-hearted—
Come to visit us once more.

"He—the young, the strong—who cherished
Noble longings for the strife,
By the roadside fell and perished,
Weary with the march of life.

"They—the holy ones and weakly—
Who the cross of suffering bore,
Folded their pale hands so meekly,
Speak with us on earth once more.

"And with them the beings beauteous,
Who unto my youth was given
More than all things else to love me,
And is now a saint in heaven.

"With a slow and noiseless footstep
Comes that messenger divine,
Takes the vacant chair beside me,
Lays her gentle hand in mine.

"And she sits and gazes at me
With those deep and tender eyes,
Like the stars, so still and saint-like,
Looking downward from the skies.

"Uttered, not yet comprehended,
Is the spirit's voiceless prayer—
Soft rebukes, in blessings ended,
Breathing from the lips of air.

"O! though oft depressed and lonely,
All my fears are laid aside,
If I but remember only
Such as these have lived and died!"

Many of our friends—those whose memory we love to cherish—have followed the martyrs up—followed the Great Master up—within the vail. And we are on our way up—up to our Father's house; and, though the cold grave lies between us and the great multitude whose home is the everlasting dwelling-place of God, as we look down on the sands at the bottom of the grave we see the retir-

ing footprints of Jesus, for he has been there and sanctified it. Halleluia! victory has been won over the realms of death! Abel was the first ransomed spirit that should swell into numbers like the sand of ocean or the dews of morning. Christ saw here the travail of his soul, and was satisfied.

5. *What did the Holy Spirit feel?* Here was his work. He had enlightened him, softened him, led him to Christ, sanctified him, sustained him through temptation, through martyrdom, and conducted him home to heaven. How did he exult over this new creation—a creation infinitely transcending the creation of the physical universe. Here was a creation that would last. The sun will not last, the moon will not last; but the soul will last. Here was a pillar that should stand in the great upper house for ever. Here was a flower that would never wither, never fade; a flower that would bloom in the regained paradise through the endless cycles of eternity. Here was a polluted spirit purified, a lost soul saved, an immortal nature rescued from hell and elevated to heaven. Here was the first song; but there would be added to it another and another voice, increasing as time rolled on, till every one in heaven and on earth and in the waters under the earth should join the anthem—a song that should swell out into a universal chorus. O! with what delight did the blessed Spirit hail this new creation!—brighter, higher, grander, more lasting than the creation of matter.

In conclusion, let me address myself to two several classes. Cain and Abel, though dead, they yet speak to us. Here are two men that stand at the head of, and represent, Deists and Christians, Pharisees and Publicans—those who seek salvation by works, and those who seek it by the cross of Christ.

*The first lesson taught us by these speaking dead is, that there is but one way to God*—one method of saving man. As we look to the Cross we cry, *Behold the way of God!*

*The second lesson is, that we may know, and that others may know, at the moment and on the spot, that God accepts our offering.*

The third lesson is, that justification by faith is a doctrine of tremendous importance to us; and rather than lose it, we had better die a thousand martyr deaths.

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## II.

## DIVINE WORKMANSHIP.

"For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands."—PSALM xcii, 4.

IN these soul-breathing productions of the man after God's own heart, what a richness, fullness, powerfulness we find! So much so that the sweet singer of Israel shall be the singer for us; and when we want apt words for apt places, choice sentences for choice sentiments, we will cull them

from this inimitable legend—the Psalter of David. The whole of the Psalms, perhaps, may be said to be capable of being thrown into the three following general classes. There is a portion of them that contains the experience of the piety of the Psalmist; and, although given out for the service of the Jew under the law, yet it is not a whit less adapted to the service of the Christian under the Gospel. The most finished Christian may find in the Psalms expressions to sustain his utmost flights of devotion, his profoundest sentiments of reverence, his highest soarings of faith, and his richest expansions of hope. There is another part of the Psalms which consists of what I take leave to call maxims or proverbs, analogous to the Proverbs of Solomon, containing "wise saws and instances," gems of moral, social, and political wisdom, ingots of intellectual gold valuable for the conduct of the affairs of life. Then there is another part of the Psalms which consists of hymns, or odes, or songs, of a directly prophetical character, in which the harp of David is eloquent, and discourses beforehand in sweet and touching music on the person, the mission, the sufferings, the shame, the scandal, the death, the burial, the resurrection, and the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Psalm from which I have taken the text belongs to the first class: it contains utterances of piety; and there is no Psalm more suited to the Sabbath-day than this. "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High." Then the Psalmist mentions the

subjects of thought and meditation, and the periods of time most appropriate to each subject: "To show forth thy loving-kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night." And then he calls upon all the varied instruments of music in use in that day to aid him in giving expression to his emotion: "Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery, and upon the harp, with a solemn sound. For (here is the text) "thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands."

Men and brethren, fellow-countrymen, and fellow-Christians, you have many of you come up from the provinces to behold the works of man, the products of his genius, the results of his skill, the fruits of his industry, the memorials of his inventive and industrial energy; and as you have walked about the vast assemblage of the products of man's power, poetry, labor, and assiduity, you have wondered and admired. Now I crave you to turn aside and behold the works of the Lord. "For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands." We will turn for a moment to the work itself—the work of the Lord; and, secondly, to some of the reasons or grounds on which a contemplation of that work is eminently fitted to inspire the breasts of good men with sentiments of peculiar gladness and joy. And while I speak to the outward ear, may God speak to the heart! Consider what I say; and may the Lord give you understanding in these things.

*First*, let us turn to THE WORK OF THE LORD. "Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work; I will triumph in the works of thy hands." All the works of God with which, as yet, we have any acquaintance, are his works of creation, of providence, and of grace. *Creation* is his work; He made the heavens and the earth; He made the earth out of nothing, hung it on nothing, flattened the poles, drew out the equator, scooped the valley, sloped the hills. He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast. The rearing of the vast visible framework of the universe, the giving it form, and symmetry, and motion, so that of that motion there comes the regular return of day and night, winter and summer, seed-time and harvest; these are the works of God. *Providence*, too, is his work. The rise and fall of individuals, the rise and fall of families, the rise and fall of nations, the rise and fall of the visible framework and platform of Churches—these things are the doing of the Lord. In providence he keeps back the face of his throne. His providence is in yonder whirlwind; his providential footsteps are past our finding out. He sits behind a visible screen-work of secondary causes, presides over all the movements of the universe, touches the springs that regulate them with the same ease with which the musician touches the strings of his instrument, hardly knowing that he touches them at all, and yet brings the music out, draws the melody forth. "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the

multitude of isles thereof be glad." But, my brethren, it is the object of the Scriptures to instruct us in a higher order of work than either that of creation or providence. The imparting of divine truth to the mind of man, the conveyance of that truth to man's intellect, the clearing of the intellect from error, the purging it of prejudice, the removal of the mildew, the blight, the blast which had befallen that intellect, the purging it, the clarifying it, the getting it filled with truth again—that is the work of God. So is the implantation of divine grace in the heart of man—that grace which at first is such a tiny thing, a little speck. You see the green speck borne on the surface of the soil—what a delicate thing it is! Of that little vegetable infant just born there soon comes the blade; but that is frail also, and trails itself on the surface of the soil; but fed by heaven, and nurtured by earth, the blade stands up and becomes a stalk, firm, erect. Nurtured still by the dews of the morning, fed by the springs of earth, fostered by the care of heaven, of that stalk there comes the ear, and at the top of the stalk a number of rows, each row filled with a number of vesicles, little granular bodies, each of these swelling, filling, and swelling again. The summer sun shines out bravely, and now you have "the full corn in the ear;" and it bows its head, and asks the reaper to gather it into the garner. Such is the *work of grace* in the soul of man. The renovation of the heart of man, the renewal of the heart in righteousness, the

removal of idolatry, the subversion of superstition, the creation of the beauties of holiness, the recovery of the heart from its vassalage to Satan, the bringing it back in rejoicing homage to God—that is the work of God.

But why is this work so emphatically called his work? "Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through *thy* work: I will triumph in the work of thy hands." Why, it is far more dependent on God for its accomplishment than it is on all other agencies besides. "Paul may plant, and Apollos may water, but it is God that giveth the increase." The work of conversion is in every sense and in every case challenged by God himself as his work. The work of addition to the Church is God's. Men may add to the Church, and sometimes they add hypocrites, sometimes formalists, sometimes infidels, but the Lord adds "such as shall be saved." You may have the most fearless John-the-Baptist preacher in the land for your preacher; he may deliver to you the elementary truths of Revelation in "thoughts that breathe and words that burn;" but until influence comes from above, until virtue rushes from the throne on high, there is no conversion. It is when the power comes from above that darkness passes away from the chamber of reason, conscience trembles in her retirement, the citadel of the soul surrenders, the banners of the cross wave in its places, and the march of the soul to glory begins. This work may emphatically be called the work of the Lord, *because it is his chief work*, his sublimest work,

his grandest achievement. We disparage none of the works of God; they are all great, grand, and glorious. What a work creation is! The angels thought so, for they watched over it during its successive stages; they gazed during the six successive fiats of the Almighty Creator; and as they beheld the work rise up under the forming hand of God, they wondered, they became excited; when they saw the first blade of grass, the first ray of light, the first drop of water, the first grain of sand, how they marveled! They had no knowledge of matter till they saw the creation of our world. There is no matter in their nature; there is none in the nature of God. When they saw matter formed, how they wondered! They mused in silent admiration for six days; but when on the sixth day they saw God take a portion of this new substance, matter, and unite with it spirit, and form of the union man, and when they saw him cover man over with the image of himself, they could restrain their emotion no longer. Having been silent six days, they now burst into a song which I must hear in heaven, which I must learn from themselves, before I can fully understand it. What a work creation is! Look at the green tints of spring, the bright flowers of summer, the rich fruitage of autumn, and then say for one moment whether there are any of the works of man which can be compared with the works of God. When you look sometimes on the work of a great painter, a great poet, a great sculptor, some great artist, you say, "There he is,

there he is," meaning by that the *imprimatur* of his master mind, the footmarks of his prodigious genius, the dash and tracery of his wondrous intellect. And when we look on the works of creation, there is God. "Marvelous are thy works, O Lord God Almighty." Providence, too, is a sublime work. Look at Tyre. Why, her merchants are princes; her shipping is an immense forest; her population is uncounted. Look again; and instead of its vast multitude, and its shipping, there is nothing but a solitary net, the net of a solitary fisherman, stretched on the top of a naked rock; and instead of the hum of the uncounted multitude there is nothing heard but the scream of the owl. Who has done this? What has done this? Providence has done it! Look at Assyria. See the flower of her army going out against Israel. They pitch their tents; they lift their lances in the sun; the helmets are nodding in the breeze; their bosoms are beating high with martial fire. Look again next morning: the helmets are not nodding, the lances are not lifted, the bosoms are not beating; the raven-wing of death has flapped over the whole army. Who has done it? What has done it? Providence has done it. The Lord fought for Israel. But great and sublime as are the works of creation and providence, the work of redemption is still more sublime. To see the brand of guilt removed from the brow of man —to see the lurking venom taken from the substance of his soul—to see the man who lay on the brink of ruin, smoking, almost singed, for ever-

lasting burning—to see him caught away from ruin, pulled back from perdition—to see him walking about with the title-deeds in his hand to an everlasting inheritance—to see him now a child of God and an heir of heaven,—that is a sight indeed! That work is the sublimest work of God!

But without detaining you longer on this part of the subject, I now pass on, in the *Second* place, to point out some REASONS or GROUNDS on which a contemplation of this work is so eminently fitted to inspire the breasts of good men with sentiments of peculiar GLADNESS. "For thou, Lord, hast made me *glad* through thy work: I will *triumph* in the works of thy hands."

And here for a moment I will pause at the threshold of this part of our subject, just to notice a popular fallacy to this effect, that though religion is respectable, sacred, venerable, yea, august and heavenly, yet it is not blithe, cheerful, gladsome; that though a respectable thing, it is rather a heavy thing; that though a venerable thing, it is rather a melancholy thing. I call that a fallacy. There is no melancholy in religion. Who are they that say that religion is gloomy? Infidels, profane men. But why should I listen to their testimony about religion? I am not in the habit of listening to the testimony of blind men about the beauties of color; I am not in the habit of listening to the testimony of deaf men upon the harmonies of sound and variations of melody; and if I do not listen to blind men about color, or to

deaf men about sounds, why should I listen to infidel men about religion? They never tasted it. They never experimented the matter. I know Lord Byron does say that man always was, and always will be, "an unlucky rascal"—that is what Lord Byron says. I know Voltaire says, in language not quite so vulgar, but equally as intelligible, that man is always devouring or being devoured, that he is a carcass rather than a man. Am I to take Lord Byron's and Voltaire's account? I will listen to David, I will listen to Paul; I will listen to Peter, and to John, and to Habakkuk, and to Daniel; I will listen to the army of martyrs, the fellowship of the apostles, and the company of the prophets, and the choir of believers; I will take their deliverance, and accept their testimony, for they have tried the matter, and they say, "Thou, Lord, hast made me *glad* through thy works: I will *triumph* in the work of thy hands."

I now crave your kind attention just for a few minutes to two, or three, or four considerations or grounds on which a contemplation of the work of grace and redemption is so fitted to kindle emotions of joy and gladness in the breasts of good men.

In the first place, then, I say, it may well do so, *because it is a work of such beneficial character and tendency.*

As a work of reparation of that that has been damaged, of renewal of that which has been defaced, of recovery of that that has been wandering,

of salvation of that that was lost, it cannot be viewed by a thoughtful mind without the deepest emotions. I never can sufficiently admire those well-selected words of that famous angel who came to announce the nativity of the Saviour: "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy. . . . For unto you is born a Saviour." My brethren, the greatest character mentioned in the Bible is our Saviour. My brethren, my fellow-countrymen, the greatest saying in the Bible is, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. The great work of Christ is, was, and ever will be, to save.

> "Salvation! O the joyful sound!
> What pleasure to our ears;
> A sov'reign balm for every wound,
> A cordial for our fears."

To see one, and another, and then another, of our fellow-men, renewed, regenerated, justified, adopted, sanctified, beautified, glorified—ah! that is a sight of all sights the most gladdening. When Barnabas went into Antioch, and saw the grace of God, he was glad. When Paul became the instrument of effecting the conversion of any poor sinner, though that sinner were but the runaway slave of another man, how excited he became! I cannot but say I think there is an error somewhere. Either we make too little of such an event, or Paul made too much of it. He wrote a letter to the master of that poor body slave, telling him what he had done. I declare if he had converted a whole continent he could not have

made more of it. Ah! I think he was right, for the angels in heaven are with him. "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." Let but a tear of repentance gather on an eye unused to weep; let but a sigh of contrition form in the bosom unused to such an emotion; let any poor sinner down here repent, and God announces the fact up in heaven: one writes the man's name down in a book; another angel with a swift wing gets up, and it flies all abroad; he tells the blessed news; the harps are caught up, the melodies are afloat, jubilees begin; and all the hierarchy of the skies rejoice over the event of the repentance of a sinner on earth. Wherever you see a sinner converted from the error of his ways, you see the first-fruits of a most glorious state, the scene of a mighty harvest. "Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands."

Secondly, I wish to say that a contemplation of this work of God is eminently fitted to kindle emotions of joy and gladness in the breasts of good men, *because it contains the richest impress of the hand of its Author.* All the works of God have some marks of his authorship. Is it Dr. Watts, or some other Christian minstrel, who says—

> "The meanest pin in nature's frame
> Marks out some letters of God's name?"

Pass through the sky. The stars, and suns, and comets, and systems, rolling round and round—

those immense masses of matter moving in their orbit with such soft and graceful ease, are

> "Singing as they shine,
> The Hand that made us is divine."

Pass through the great wide sea: it tells of its Author. The ocean is an image, I had almost said, of divinity, a mirror of infinity, a reflection of eternity—ever preaching of God, of his infinity, immensity, and eternity. So I might go on, but so I will not do. I say that this work of grace contains a richer impress of the hand of its divine Author than do the works of nature. When our Lord Jesus Christ came a light into our world darkness covered it, gross darkness lay upon it; and standing on earth, looking to heaven, lifting his hands, he said—I had almost said he boasted, and if I had said so I should not have recalled the expression; we cannot boast; no man can boast; no creature can boast; but Jesus Christ boasted, and had a right to boast; and of all the utterances that he said, is not this one of the most affecting? Standing on earth, and looking up to heaven, he said, "Father, I have manifested thy name; I have declared it, and I will declare it. No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten in the bosom of the Father, he hath revealed him." O! these words, "He hath revealed him." What a revelation! a revelation of God! And when the apostles went forth preaching the Gospel—preaching the author of the Gospel, and Christ the principal subject of the

Gospel, then there followed changes which are described by the Apostle Paul in his own masterly way; and if any body wants me to give him an expression containing the whole philosophy of religion, I will give him the following: "We all, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

And what I have said of the general character of God, I now say of the several parts of that character—if, indeed, I may use such an expression in speaking of the Almighty. Of course, by the parts of his character I mean his perfections, his attributes. And where is there such a display of power as is this work of redemption? Where is there such a manifestation of power as in the resurrection of the body of the Saviour, and of the conversion of the dead soul of the sinner? I know they had put the body of the Saviour into a new sepulcher hewn out of a rock; I know they rolled a great stone into the mouth of it; I know they set a watch, and put a seal. Did they roll a great stone there? If they had dug up all the hills round about Jerusalem, and put them on the sepulcher—if they had dug the Alps up to the root, dissected the Andes from her foundation, cut up the Himalaya from her bed, and had put the Alps, and the Andes, and the Himalaya all on the sepulcher of Christ, would it have prevented the resurrection of his body? No! He was raised according to the mighty working of the glorious power of God. And what I say of

this power in effecting the resurrection of the body of our Saviour from the grave, is equally true in effecting the conversion of the soul of the sinner. There is a grave for you, there is a mausoleum, there is a sepulcher, on which is written with the finger of God, "dead in trespasses and in sins." Can the dead live? Will the charnel-house move? Will the grave fly open? "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." O, the power of grace in us! And what I said of the power of God is equally true of the wisdom of God, and of all his other attributes. There is wisdom displayed in his works of nature, and his movements of providence, as we have said. Look at the flower in your garden. Look at the arrangements of the petals to form the corolla; look how one petal is put alongside another petal, and the whole grouped together in such a wondrous way that there is the largest collection of beauty in the smallest possible space, the largest accumulation of odor in the tiniest cavities. Look at that flower, and then turn your eyes upward to the surface of the sky, and see the flowers there; for if there are flowers of earth there are also flowers of the sky. God hath sent the constellations; they are flowers. When he made the stars, he did not fling them out of his hands like so many loose points of light to find their own location in the firmament. He made Arcturus, he made Orion, he made the Pleiades, he grouped the stars. Just as he grouped the petals to form the flowers, so he grouped the

stars to form the constellation. There is the constellation shining over our heads; and what but grouped in such a way as to flash the largest amount of beauty, and shed the richest radiance of benignant influence on this lower world? But O! look this way, and there is One speaking who says, "I am the rose of Sharon," "I am the lily of the valley," "I am the bright and morning star." I do not wonder that the Apostle Paul, that master spirit, whose strokes were all his own —I do not wonder that he should say, that God in this scheme of redemption has "abounded in all wisdom." I have not time to follow this out—I mean you have not time to permit me; therefore, what I have said here must serve as a sample of what might be said as to all the other attributes of the Godhead. They are all revealed in the work of redemption as they are revealed nowhere else.

Thirdly, I take leave for a moment to say, that this work is eminently calculated to inspire the breasts of good men with emotions of peculiar joy and gladness, *because it is a work so surprising and unexpected.* Surprise is that faculty of the mind which has the power of very materially heightening the effect of any thing. I am not going to trouble you with the philosophy of surprise; I merely say, it is that faculty of the mind which has the power of very materially heightening the effect of any thing upon that mind. If any event occurs which you had no conception of —if it occur suddenly, beyond all your calcula-

tions, the very suddenness and unexpectedness of its occurrence give it a purchase over the mind. This holds true as to Christianity—I say it is the most unexpected of all things. It never entered into the mind of man, abounding as its thoughts are; discursive, exploring, analytical as they are. It never occurred to the mind of man, that God, in order to effect the conversion of the sinner, the destruction of sin, and the creation of the beauties of holiness, would give his own Son, take him out of his bosom, send him down into our world, clothe him in our nature, put him in our own place, and then pour upon him the wrath which we had accumulated. It never occurred to the mind of any one that, in order to render the interposition of his Son effectual to actual salvation, God would send his Holy Spirit, and say to him, "Go you after that sinner; go and catch him, convince him, soften him, draw him; go to him, tell him I send you on an errand of love, bring him to Christ, fetch him to the cross, that he may be saved, and saved forever." Here God has gone beyond all our expectations. His ways are not as our ways; his thoughts are not as our thoughts. The effects of the Gospel are all startling; the doctrines of the Gospel are all surprising; the privileges of the Gospel are all transcendental; the prospects of the Gospel—nay, I must here avail myself of language consecrated by inspiration, and say, "Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man what God hath laid up for them that love

Him." As to the afflictions of life, Christianity places them in quite a new point of view. Now afflictions seem to be blessings; now the cross is found to be a crown; now shame is found to be glory. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

I add, once more, that this work is eminently fitted to excite emotions of joy and gladness in us *on account of its permanency.* Sometimes this work appears to go on faster than at other times; it seems to have a more rapid progress in some places than in other places. Sometimes it seems as if there was a suspension of it; but no, there is never a suspension of it: the work is always going on. When our voices have ceased to speak of it, and our hearts have given up beating in sympathy with it, other voices shall be telling of it, and other hearts shall be moving with it. Thus and thus shall it be till the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, till the light of the sun shall be as the light of seven suns together. Thus and thus shall it be till the beauties of holiness clothe every region, and songs of salvation float on every breeze. Thus and thus shall it be. This work shall advance, and spread, and triumph, and grow, and prosper, till there shall be unbelief nowhere, faith every-where; hatred nowhere, love every-where; confusion nowhere, order every-where; war nowhere, peace every-where; darkness nowhere, light every-where; Satan nowhere on earth, Christ every-where.

Finally, my friends, this work is eminently fitted to kindle emotions of the highest joy, *because of its necessary connection with still higher operations.* I don't know whereabouts we are in this work; I don't know what link we form in this great chain; but the works are in progress; the links are adding, and some that are added are already rubbing into brightness before our eyes. As the works of that clock will not stop for me, I must content myself with saying that the work is too much for one world to hold. When it has filled one world it will rush over into another, and fill the recesses of eternity when earth is a cinder and time a story.

Now, my dear friends—for, having spoken to you an hour upon things like this, I think a colder and more formal mode of address will do no justice to my feelings toward you; your minds and my mind cannot coalesce here for an hour in truths of this nature without affinities; at any rate, mine become strong toward you, whatever be the strength of your affinities toward me; therefore, I cannot adopt a colder mode of utterance than that of my dear friends and brethren—what think you of this work of God? When David wanted an ordinary measure of joy and gladness, he contemplated the ordinary works of God—his works of creation and providence; but when he wanted a holiday of joy, a jubilee of joy, a triumph of joy, he stood on Mount Zion, tuned his harp to the wonders of redemption, and then his joy, which before had been regular and even,

swelled like a river swollen by streams descending from a thousand hills; the mighty torrent fills up all this bed of the river, reaches its margin, flows over its bank, and floods the adjacent country. So the Psalmist had a triumph of joy—"Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands." Are you the subjects of this work? "Marvel not that I say unto you, Ye must be born again." Except a man be converted, he cannot see the kingdom of God. May I call upon you who are the subjects of this work to seek for its extension in your own experience? All that you have experienced of it is little compared with what you may experience. What says Paul himself? "I count not myself to have apprehended." "I count all things but loss, that I may know"—may know! Why, did he not know? He had been six and twenty years at the feet of Christ; he had written his divine epistles; he had been caught up into the third heaven. Did not he know? He says, "that I *may* know." But is it some new school of knowledge he wishes to get into? No, it is not a new school; he only wanted to get on a higher form in the same school. Now, my dear friends and Christian brethren, I call upon you to labor to promote the extension of this work among others around you. Let no man live to himself. "Curse ye Meroz, . . . curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord." What! does God need help? No, he does not need help, but he allows you to help; and because he allows

you to help he challenges your help. Come up to "the help of the Lord against the mighty." Christ has got into his car of truth; he has ascended his chariot; the chariot moves, the anthem swells, the chorus begins its halleluia; the King is coming, go ye out to meet him. Step out, step out; if you do not you will be trodden under foot, or left ingloriously behind. "These are they," he will say by and by, "that followed me in the regeneration; I appoint to you the kingdom of heaven."

Finally, there are some men, the ignorant, the infidel, the sensual, of this generation, who affect to despise this work of God, to sneer at it, to calumniate it, to misrepresent it as fanaticism, Quixotism, enthusiasm. I am not surprised at it. These men were foretold in the Scriptures: "Behold, I work a work in your day which ye will in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." Suffer me to warn such men. Not merely are they foretold, but their doom is foretold if they persist in despising the work of God: "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish." It never can be a small matter to despise a work which God Almighty works; it never can be a venial matter to ridicule and sneer at that work of which the Holy Ghost has the administration; it never can be a trifling fault to ridicule and misrepresent that work which occupies the energies of the Son of God on his throne at the right hand of the majesty in the heavens; it never can be a slight matter to sneer at and ridicule that work which occupies the con-

templation of the highest power and the highest angels; it never can be a small matter to trample under foot and ridicule that work which kindles in the breast of the purest men sentiments of the highest gladness and joy!

## III.

### THE STONE REFUSED BY THE BUILDERS.

"The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes."—PSALM cxviii, 22, 23.

THERE is a great singularity in the composition of the book of Psalms, and so much so, that it differs from all other books of Scripture. And here it seems to unite, blend, and amalgamate the principal characteristics of all the other books of the inspired volume together. It is historical, it is doctrinal, it is practical, it is pathetic, and, as you all know, it is pre-eminently devotional; so much so, that the sweet singer of Israel shall be the singer for us; and when we want apt words for apt places, joint sentences for joint sentiments, we will cull them from the inimitable Psalter of David, for there is none like it. For though it were composed indeed for the service of the Jew under the law, it is not the less adapted to the service of the Christian under the Gospel; but, like the manna

which came down out of the clouds, and fell on the tents of the Israelites, it accommodates itself to all.

Perhaps the whole of the psalms may be said to be capable of being thrown into the three following general classes. A considerable part of the psalms consists of ideas, or notices, or brief jottings, so to speak, of the religious experience of the psalmist. Therefore, as religion is substantially the same in every place and in every age, these expressions of piety are valuable now, and are fitted to sustain the soul of the most finished Christian, to feed his faith, to invigorate his hope, to deepen his love. And another part of the psalms consists of what I take leave to call proverbs, analogous to the Proverbs of Solomon, and maxims; of circumstances, and instances, and sentences, in which the results of a thoughtful mind are embodied; of men, and manners, and things, available for ordinary life, for political life, for public life, for every-day life; so that every man may find in the psalms and proverbs, a terse, pithy, golden rule of life of the greatest importance. But another and principal part of the psalms consists of canticles, or songs of devoutly prophetic character; in which the harp of David speaks eloquently of the mystery of Christ, and discourses in glorious music beforehand concerning the life, the doings, the sufferings, the death, the burial, the resurrection and ascension—concerning the shame, the honor, the scandal, the renown, the humiliation, the exaltation of David's

Son and David's Lord. It is to this last class of psalms that the one belongs from which we have taken our text. It is a psalm consisting of a lyrical ode, constructed with great art, and skill, and power, and eloquence, in which the arrival of a conqueror, after a great enterprise in which he has been successful, is foretold. I say the ode describes the return of such a conqueror from his difficult conquest, and his approach to the temple to acknowledge the victory which had been obtained. He comes up the slope of the hill on which the temple stood; he has a retinue of followers behind him; he says as he climbs the slope of the hill, "Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall: but the Lord helped me." And he says, "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord." Coming to the top of the hill, and appearing in front of the temple, he says, "Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, and I will praise the Lord." The Levites and priests who are performing service in the temple, and at the gates, respond to this call, and flinging the gates open before him, they welcome him, saying, "This is the gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter." Hence, stepping over the threshold, and appearing within the temple, he says, "I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation." Then the conqueror, the priests, the Levites in the temple, and the retinue who attended him up to the temple, altogether join in chorus, saying, "The stone which the builders refused is become

the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes."

To what particular event this language originally applies, I will not now undertake to say. It may have been a rhetorical, poetical description of some of those transitions in the personal and public fortunes of David, in which his life so much abounded. But if ever there was a meaning at all, that meaning is now lost, swallowed up, merged in the richer, undoubted application of the text to the Messiah. There is hardly any one passage in the Old Testament Scriptures quoted so often by the writers of the New Testament as the text. It has been cited by them some six or seven times, word for word, and upon every occasion on which they cite the language, they apply it unequivocally, exclusively, and rapturously to the Messiah of the Jews, the Christ of the Gentiles. I proceed, then, on infallible authority, when from this text I preach to you Jesus. He is the "stone refused by the builders;" and I tell you that he has now become "the chief stone of the corner." I affirm that "this is the Lord's doing," and that "it is marvelous in our eyes."

Let me speak to you, men and brethren, freely—First, Of the rejection of the Messiah as here described: he is called "the stone refused by the builders." Secondly, In contrast with this, let us notice the subsequent exaltation of Christ: "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner." Thirdly, Let us dwell on the agency by which this transition in the

fortunes of the stone has been effected: "This is the Lord's doing." Fourthly, and lastly, let us notice the claim which the magnificent event has upon the attention and admiration of men: "It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes."

I. Notice the Views here given on the Rejection of the Messiah. He is said to have been "the stone refused by the builders." By the builders we are to understand the rulers of the Jews: their priests, their Pharisees, their great men, their official men. That Christ was refused by those builders will appear if we consider, first, the ignominy with which they treated his person; and, secondly, if you consider the opposition with which they met his doctrine.

1. I say, he was "a stone refused by the builders," *because of the ignominy with which they treated his person.*

And if you form to yourselves any thing like a correct idea of the ignominy with which the person of Christ was treated by the rulers of the Jews, you must figure to your minds one against whom all the mighty men of the nation were set; to oppose whom, the most conflicting sects of religion, the scribes and Pharisees, united together; against whom, with a malignity until then unprecedented, and never since equaled, every engine of destruction, cruelty, and malice was seized, and directed, and turned, till at length, headed by the rulers, goaded on by the priests, stimulated by the Pharisees, the whole body of the people rose *en masse*,

and cried, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him, crucify him. Behold, all ye that pass by;" see him whom the machinations of wicked Jews have brought before Pontius Pilate, and there condemned by an unholy sentence to an ignominious death. The builders refused the stone; they trampled on his word, derided his authority, slighted his tears, mocked at his benevolence, traced his miracles to satanic agency. They said, "Away with him, crucify him." The stone was refused by the builders. Then, O! who was he that was rejected? The Son of God! fairer than the sun of the morning. He said of himself that he was "the bright and morning star." They derided him when he was on the cross; they said, "Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God; if you be the Christ, save yourself." He might have come down from the cross as soon as they had nailed him to it; he might have disentangled himself from the horrid gibbet; he might have disengaged himself from the irons which had been driven through his hands and his feet. The severity of the anguish he endured called louder to him than the rulers at the foot of the cross—"Come down from the cross!" He might have done so; he might have spread his wings and soared away to Paradise at once, but he did not, he would not. *He hung on, held on, bled on, died on,* till redemption was complete, and man was delivered; and then the universe was gladdened.

2. Christ was "the stone refused by the build-

ers," *because of the opposition with which they met his doctrine.*

His doctrine was the only corner-stone that could bring God and man together on amicable, honorable terms. His doctrine was the only corner-stone that could bring different parts of Scripture together, and make them speak a harmonious, an intelligible language; the only corner-stone on which angels and men could come together; on which the disrupted parts of the moral universe could come together; and out of materials, naturally repellant and discordant, one magnificent, beautiful structure be reared. O, the doctrine of Christ was this, all this, more than all this! The builders refused it! They threw it away as rubbish. That stone, that beautiful stone, on which their eyes ought to have been fixed and centered in joy and wonder, was to them a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense. Why should we turn the edge of our censure against the Jews? We are almost ready to say, when we remember and call to mind the ignominy with which they treated the person of Christ, and the opposition with which they met his doctrine—we are almost tempted to say: O, ye infatuated people! what could move you to mock, to taunt, to crucify and slay "the Lord of life and glory?" He healed your sick, he cleansed your lepers, he raised your dead, he gave sight to your blind! What did you crucify him for? O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem! he ennobled thee by his birth, he enlightened thee by his doctrine, he distinguished thee by his

miracles, he felt for thee such an attachment, and such a regard, that he would have "gathered thee as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not." Ye would not! Ye would not! Here is an appeal by the mouth of his divine Father: O, my people, what have I done unto thee? Wherein have I wearied thee?—testify against me! I brought you out of Egypt by my great power; by my stretched-out arm I made a way for you through the Red Sea, drying up the water for the soles of your feet. I brought you into the wild crags, and carried you out as on eagles' wings. I fed you with manna from the clouds and water from the rock; I gave you Moses for a prophet, Aaron for a priest, and Miriam for a prophetess; I brought you into the land of Canaan; I gave you houses to live in that you did not build, wine to drink that ye did not make; I gave you olive-fields and pomegranates; I gave you David and Solomon for kings; I gave you Joshua for a judge,—what have ye against me? wherein have I wearied thee? I say, again, why should we turn the edge of our censure against the Jews? The sin of refusing the Lord that bought us is not peculiar to the Jewish rabbi; this is common guilt. How many of you refuse Christ—reject him! How many of you are trusting to your own philosophic morality, your own righteousness—going about to establish a righteousness of your own? Why, you might as well attempt to make the stream run up the mountain side, as well attempt to walk the starry firmament

with your clayey feet, to get Satan from the bottomless pit, and wipe the brands from his brow by a single wave of your hand, as to think of a righteousness of your own. Behold the Lamb of God! He is exalted, extolled, and become very high.

II. Notice the subsequent exultation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is said that the stone refused is a stone exalted. I shall here call your attention to two ideas which are evident from the former part of the discourse. I shall endeavor to show you, first, that the stone refused by the builders has become the head stone of the corner, inasmuch as that our Saviour's mediatorial person has become highly exalted; and inasmuch as that our Saviour's doctrines became speedily victorious, subduing the hearts of men, and nations of men, to the faith.

1. I say, the stone refused by the builders is become the head stone of the corner, *inasmuch as our Saviour's person has become highly exalted.*

Why, Christ is now as high as ever he was low! Thrown away as rubbish, and cast into the grave as offensive, noxious matter, that stone has been taken out of the grave, lifted up, and placed on the top of the temple of the universe; and there it is! Why, Christ, I say again—Christ is now as high as ever he was low; his personal glory has shone from behind the clouds that obscured it. Consider his ascension into heaven; listen to the martial music which accompanies his flight into the heaven of heavens. As he went up he diffused a joy on that occasion among all the

innumerable spirits that dwell in the light and love of heaven. The songs of angels and of archangels rolled to rapture when they saw him take his seat at the right hand of the Majesty on high. Listen to the martial music; listen to the acclamations of joy—gone up! gone up! with the shout of all; with the sound of the trumpet! Sing praises to our God! O, sing praises! Sing praises! The stone refused is a stone exalted!

2. *The exaltation of Christ also appears by the victory gained by his doctrine, in rapidly subduing the hearts of men, and nations of men, to the faith.*

That stone which the wise men of Jerusalem threw away as rubbish, apostles, and their successors in spirit and labors, took and laid as a foundation. And behold the consequence! There rises on that stone a building; materials are collected for it from the cottages of a nation, the halls, the palaces, and the huts. Materials for the temple are collected from east, west, north, and south. The stone is a loadstone, a magnetic stone, and it draws men to it. Christ said, "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me." Behold these materials collecting on this foundation stone, as they rise up a superstructure, bright with beauty, adorned with Divine presence! The temple rises higher and higher, fairer and fairer—a temple that fills the skies! At first, indeed, the doctrine of Christ did not prevail among the rich and the great; not many wise men, not many noble men, not many great men accepted it at first. The poor

first believed, the poor first accepted, it. But it was not long before it was like "the sound of a mighty rushing wind" in high places. Philosophers were touched and conquered by its truth; magicians were fascinated with its charms; princes planted their thrones alongside of Him of Jesse. The doctrines of Christ crucified pervaded the Roman empire, triumphed in the senate, triumphed in the palace, and obtained a golden victory in the senate-house of Rome! "The stone refused by the builders has become the head stone of the corner."

III. In the next place, CONSIDER THIS CHANGE IN THE FORTUNES OF THE STONE AS THE DOING OF THE LORD, AND NOT THE DOING OF MAN; NOT THE WORK OF ANGELS, NOT THE ACHIEVEMENT OF ANGELS, BUT THE DOING OF THE LORD.

This is the Lord's doing. It is the doing of all the persons in the Trinity; it is the doing of all the attributes of the Godhead; it is the doing of all the dispensations of Providence.

1. *It is the doing of all the persons in the Trinity.*

The Father raised up the Son; the Father ordained him, anointed him, sent him; the Father acclaimed him, proclaimed him; the Father said by his voice on the banks of the Jordan, "This is my beloved Son; hear ye him!" The Son, in virtue of that power which he held in right of his divinity, laid down his life; took it again; took unto him his great power, and lives and reigns for evermore. And as to the Holy Ghost, I need not tell you that He who speaks by the prophets

afterward speaks more powerfully by the apostles, accompanying them wherever they went; clothing their words with fire, with more than the electric fluid, till they penetrated consciences, and renovated kingdoms. "It is the Lord's doing." What is the office of the Holy Ghost? To glorify Christ. Christ himself said, "He shall take of mine, and show it unto you." The things of Christ are in this book; and never till the Holy Ghost takes them, lifts them up, as it were, and gives a sort of dead lift—never till then are you properly subdued. You know a flower that you see in your hand or garden; you know it, because of the knowledge you have had of it: but let the botanist take that flower in his hand; let him define it, describe it, give you its philosophy, its qualities, its medicinal merits, its natural power, its affinity, its antipathy—let him show this, and what a different thing it is now! You know the stone which strikes your feet; but let the naturalist get hold of it, let him peel off its incrustation, and out comes a beauty spot. And this is the fountain of life. You know it. It is the Holy Ghost that takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto men.

2. *This exaltation of Christ is the doing of all the attributes of the Godhead*—

The power of God, the wisdom of God, the faithfulness of God, the truth of God, the holiness of God, and his excellent loving-kindness. But one word on the unity of these. It is the doing of his excellent loving-kindness. It was the kind-

ness of Christ thus to exalt himself. "Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honor." "Blessed is the man whom thou hast caused to approach unto thee;" even to thy Godhead. "God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." It was excellent loving-kindness to us; for if "the stone refused by the builders" had never been made the "head stone of the corner," you and I would never have been lifted up from the dust; we should never have been lifted up from our forlorn and miserable condition But Christ being lifted up, we are lifted up; he being exalted, we are exalted too. What are prophets and apostles to us without this stone? What are martyrs to us—what are services and sacraments to us—without this stone? Take away this stone, and the saints in heaven fall from their thrones in glory! Take away this stone, and the saints on earth, climbing to heaven, fall back immediately! Take away this stone, and the grand living temple that has been building for ages crumbles into dust, and covers the universe with its fragments! Fertility would fail, and desolation would fall on the universe, if you were to take it away. You cannot take it away! Mercy is built up forever; Christ is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, and he is exalted forever.

3. Finally, on this part of the subject, *it is the doing of the Lord, inasmuch as it is the doing of all the dispensations of Providence.*

I do not undertake to put my finger on the

point of connection between all the events of Providence and the elevation to the mediatorial throne of Christ. I do not undertake to show you the connection between the movements of Providence and the advancement of the Messiah's kingdom. My inability to trace that connection before you now does not disprove the connection. In such a thing as a manufactory, constructed by human art and device, a peasant going into the manufactory sees a great number of substances lying about, the uses of which he does not understand: he looks at the machinery, and sees wheels rolling this way, and other wheels rolling that way, but to him it is all confusion. What is confusion to him is music to the engineer; what is chaos to him is harmony to the proprietor; what is disturbance to him is symmetry itself to the presiding genius who conducts the whole. And all these movements which are going on in providence have an end; and why? For the King is coming! the King is coming! Behold him coming! go ye forth to meet him. The wheels of Providence are some rolling this way, and some that way; some seem rolling adverse to the others; but if you look well at them you will find an eye in every wheel, and let the wheel turn which way it will, the eye in every wheel is looking one way, and that is at the throne of Christ. All things are hastening to be made bonds at his feet.

"All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all."

IV. I now go on to the fourth part of the subject; and that is, TO SHOW YOU THE CLAIM WHICH THIS MAGNIFICENT EVENT—THE EXALTATION OF CHRIST—HAS UPON THE ATTENTION AND ADMIRATION OF MEN.

"It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes." I beg to say that I shall call your attention here to the only two ideas that I have hitherto drawn upon throughout the discourse. I shall show you, first, in a few brief sentences, how the exaltation of the Saviour's mediatorial person is marvelous in our eyes; and then, secondly, more plainly show you how the victory gained by the doctrines of Christ in subduing men, and nations of men, continents of men, hemispheres of men, to the faith, is marvelous in our eyes. May God open our eyes to show us the marvel!

1. I say, *that the exaltation of the Saviour's mediatorial person is marvelous in our eyes.*

What can be more truly marvelous than that the same body which lay in the womb of the Virgin, in the manger in Bethlehem, on the cold ground in the wilderness of Judea, wandering up and down like a common Jew peasant, sitting on the well of Jacob, covered with dust and oppressed with languor—that that same body which sweat drops of blood in Gethsemane, agonized in the garden, was crucified on Calvary, was buried in the tomb, was covered up, sealed in, fastened in—what can be more truly marvelous than that that same body should quicken, unlock the tomb, pass again into immortality on the third day, and be-

come the head of an immortal society? "It is marvelous in our eyes!" I know they rolled a great stone to the mouth of the sepulcher; I know they sealed that stone; I know they set a watch upon the tomb. But had they got up all the hills round about Jerusalem, and thrown them on the sepulcher; if they had cut up the Alps by their roots, and dashed the Ganges from its bed, and rolled all on the sepulcher, would that have prevented his resurrection? No! He would have removed the superincumbent mass; for He was raised according to the glorious working of the mighty power of God. "It is marvelous in our eyes."

I do not intend now to dwell on the comparison between the present personal glory of the body of Christ and his previous humiliation. Nor do I intend to introduce just now any comparison between the personal glory of Christ's present and all other glory. I know there is other glory—the glory of the sun; the glory of the moon; the glory of principalities, and powers, and thrones, and dominions. But what are they all? What are they all, but fugitive shadows? What are they all, but evanescent representations of the glory that is far above all heights, and fills all space? Halleluia! Christ is on the throne! All kingdoms sink into bonds at his feet. "It is marvelous in our eyes!"

2. *I wish to show you, a little more at length, the victory gained by the doctrines of Christ.*

"It is marvelous in our eyes." I was going to

say that there is a seven-fold marvel: whether you consider the doctrine which won the victory, the instruments employed, the weapons that were wielded by those instruments while they were propagating the doctrine, the opposition over which it triumphed, the number of those on whom it took hold, and over whom it prevailed, or the supernatural effects on all those of whom it took hold—whether you consider the one or the other, "it is marvelous in our eyes." Look at the *doctrine itself.* It was not a doctrine agreeable to the natural inclinations; it was not a doctrine according to the national usages. It was a doctrine that tore up the pride and false confidence of men; it was a doctrine that denounced false philosophy, false theology, and every thing false; it was a doctrine calling on men to give up honors, forego pleasures, contemn riches—a doctrine that called men to forgive their enemies, and to quench the first emotions of anger and revenge—a doctrine that called men to believe in the divinity of a man who, when he was alive, had not where to lay his head, and in death no place but in another man's grave, and to believe in the atoning efficacy of the blood shed on Calvary—a doctrine that called men to believe in the immortality of the soul, which had been deemed a mere matter of reasoning and conjecture, and in the resurrection of the body, which the science of reason had always declared to be a downright physical impossibility. It was a doctrine that went out with a crown on its head, and a scepter in its hand, and before which the wilder-

ness became the garden of the Lord. Listen to what is uttered by one of the propagators of these doctrines: "Where is the Scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching"—by the enthusiasm of preaching, to save them that believe. The Jews require a sign, the Greeks seek after wisdom—we preach. They require a sign—we preach; they seek after wisdom—we preach Christ crucified, the wisdom of God, the power of God. Before this preaching their philosophy will vanish. It is the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation.

Then, again, if you look at the *persons* who were employed in propagating this doctrine—those who were first engaged in it. Were they got from the colleges of Greece and Rome, or called from the academies of the learned and the wise found in Judea? No! They were fetched from the ships of Nazareth, the ports of Galilee; they were fishermen and tentmakers—"Not many wise men; not many noble men." God chose the weak things of the world to confound the mighty. "They were able to bring to light things that were unknown." "It is the Lord's doing!" The judge on the bench, the philosopher in his hall, said, "Whence have these men this wisdom? whence have these men this power?" The security and success of the apostolic ministry were in the hands of the Lord; he was with them, and a great number believed.

But what were the *weapons wielded by those men?* Not threats, not menaces, not the edge and the point of the sword, not human learning, not despotic power. They went on "conquering and to conquer," by what? I tell you all the weapons they had—zealous preaching, holy living, constant praying, patient suffering; that is all. These were weapons, the edge of which was never blunted, and the evolutions of which turned the world upside down. "It is marvelous in our eyes."

The marvel will more fully appear, if you consider the *opposition over which it triumphed.* It triumphed over the splendid theories of false philosophy, over an interested, jealous, and powerful priesthood, over the hostility and tyranny of powerful princes, over the malice and power of hell, over the enthralling vices, and passions, and prejudices of the human heart. The mountain of pride was pressed down, and the valley of humiliation was lifted up. "It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes."

And, once more, *think of the numbers of those of whom the doctrine took hold*, and over whom it prevailed. Ah! but who shall declare Christ's generation! who shall number the fourth part of Israel! Can you count the sand on the seashore? Can you count the stars in the sky? Where did the doctrine prevail? It prevailed in Corinth, the eye of Greece; it prevailed in Ephesus, where they worshiped the great goddess Diana; it prevailed in Antioch, and overcame idolatry so far as to originate a new name for believers in it, for we

read, "The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch." It prevailed—where did it not prevail? It prevailed in Rome itself. Whereabouts in Rome? was it among the ignorant population? Why, it prevailed in the palace of Cesar; for one of the writers of the New Testament says, "The saints that are in Cesar's household salute you." Indeed! What! saints in Cesar's household? One would almost as soon have expected saints in hell itself as in the palace of Cesar! The fact is, the Gospel will prevail anywhere—in high places, in low places, in mansions, in huts, in palaces and cottages. Nothing can hide it.

And we may still swell the marvel if we consider *the supernatural effects which it produced on all those on whom it fell and took hold.* The lion was coming out of the thicket of the forest, and dashing forward toward the fold where the sheep were feeding, with his paw on the fence, just springing over;—he is arrested; his fire goes off from his nature; he takes down his paw gently from the fence, and walks in and feeds with the lambs. The lamb and the lion lie down together; the leopard and the kid lie down together. A little silken thread is put about the lamb, and the lion, and the leopard, and the kid, and put into a child's hand, and he leads them. Take up the thorn, the unsightly thorn: instead of the thorn, there comes up the beautiful, sweet-scented myrtle tree; and instead of the bramble, the offensive bramble, there comes up the stately and the majestic fir-tree. "It is the Lord's doing, and it is

marvelous in our eyes." This was not a lascivious, abominable doctrine, which pandered to man's pride, but laid it in the dust. In short, like the sun—the fairest image in nature—it enlightened, irradiated, fructified, beautified the desert and the wilderness, and made them blossom and bud, laugh and sing, like the garden of the Lord. "It is marvelous in our eyes."

But, my friends, there are two or three lessons which rise out of the subject, and to which I will call your attention for a moment or two on our way toward the close, and they come before us with the power of demonstration.

1. *We learn from this subject the divinity of the Christian religion*—that Jesus Christ is from heaven, and that his religion is divine. I know there are not wanting men who deny this—who deny that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and deny that his religion is from heaven. Cruel and unhappy men! Cruel and unhappy men! They would rob us of our faith, which is to us more precious than gold that is tried in the fire. They would rob us of our hope, that which is to us an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast. Cruel and unhappy men! Take away what you will, but do not take our religion away. Why should you filch the crutch from old age? Why filch the staff from manhood—this staff of youth, its guide? Cruel and unhappy men! I tell you, we will not give up our holy faith for your damning unbelief! We will not give up our blessed hope for your accursed and withering despair. Neither will we

render railing for railing; but, the contrary, blessing. We will pray the Father of all illumination, that he may open the eyes of your understanding, as he hath opened ours, which were once as dark as yours! We will pray the Father of all illumination, that he may send the irradiation of the light of his grace into your hearts! But we would remind infidels—and not only professed infidels, but all practical infidels—that this "stone" is too great an object for you to possess it, to seize it with impenitence. Get upon it, and you have made your fortunes; get upon this stone, and the heavens are yours. Yes, the happiness of heaven is yours if you are on this stone! You have made your fortunes; you have done more than possess California or El Dorado—more than oceans of gold! But if you will not get upon the stone, the stone will be upon you; and if the stone fall upon you, it will grind you to powder. "He that believeth shall be saved: he that believeth not shall be damned." "Lord, increase our faith!"

2. We learn from this text and this subject *that this should reconcile us to our present suffering and afflictions, and even to the prospect of death itself.*

The language consecrated by inspiration, which I will now recite, will express my meaning better than any collocation of words of my own which I could now form. The language consecrated by inspiration, which I would now quote, is this: "I reckon that the sufferings of this present life are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed in us." What do you say? Do

you say that the world is to you a "pleasant place?" I know that to some men it is so. And, cultivated by the hand of industry, it is a garden that yields some delightful flowers; but if you would have the world a garden, you will allow me to remind you what sort of a garden it is. Like that garden which you read of in the Gospel—"There was a garden"—"there *was* a garden; and in that garden there was a sepulcher." Well, the world is at once the cradle and the grave of enjoyment! However beautiful its flowers are, however fragrant its fruits are, the flowers droop and fade, and the fruits drop and die—for in the garden "there *is* a sepulcher."

My believing brethren, lift up your heads; lift them up! look up! The grave beneath every shadow speaks. The flower lifts its head, and unbosoms its beauty, and diffuses its fragrance—a flower that never fades, and never droops, and never dies: I mean the flower of immortality. Christ saith to you, "Because I live, ye shall live also." Christ is watching you out of the very windows of heaven, with all the glories of the Godhead in his face, and all the music of heaven in his voice. He is calling to you, and he says, "Arise! arise! my love, my fair one, and come away; for the winter is past; the rains are already gone; the voice of the starling is heard in our land, the music of singing birds and spring flowers are come. Arise! my love, my fair one; this is not your rest; it is polluted; stretch thy wings; come thee away; stretch thy pinions, and be gone!"

## IV.

### THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

"He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay."—MATTHEW xxviii, 6.

SUCH were the words which were spoken by the angels—spoken by angels to those women whose love to Christ was not surpassed, unless it were by the angels themselves; whose attachment to the Redeemer suffered no abatement of ardor; whose affection sustained no decay, and felt no decline. The angels are, indeed, exceedingly conspicuous in all the great events of our Saviour's history on earth. At his nativity they were visible, audible; they quitted every fountain of celestial intelligence, and came down to hover over the scenes of Bethlehem, and with their unearthly music they announced the nativity of Jesus, of the Saviour; and now, at the second nativity of Christ—his resurrection, his birth from the grave, his coming up out of the sepulcher—the angels are there again, full of affection, full of zeal, full of tender offices: and as they had dispelled the fears of the shepherds in Bethlehem, saying unto them, "Fear ye not," so they dispel the fears of the women at the sepulcher. "The angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay."

There is nothing to affright us this evening; there is no earthquake, no supernatural sound, no awful phenomenon, to affright us. Let us, therefore, in the stillness and composure of a Sabbath evening, pay a visit to the sepulcher of Him of Nazareth, and learn from that sepulcher the mighty lessons of instruction and wisdom which it so well teaches.

I propose, in the first place, to set before you the truth of the resurrection of Christ, and, in the second place, the importance of it.

I. We will first notice THE EVIDENCE OF THE GREAT FACT ASSERTED IN THE TEXT—THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

*The death of Christ* was a fact; no one denied that: it was allowed that he died; it was never disputed that he gave up the ghost. Pilate acknowledged he was dead; the centurion said he was dead; the Roman soldiers said he was dead; the men who went to break the legs of the men who were hanging on the crosses, when they came to Him who was on the middle cross, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs. It is a fact, then, never disputed, never denied, never controverted, that Jesus was really dead on Calvary. In fact, Pontius Pilate would never have given away the body of Jesus to Nicodemus unless he was quite certain that the spark of life was fled.

There is another fact which was never denied either, and that is, that *Christ was buried:* no one ever doubted that, no one ever denied that, no

one ever controverted that. He was buried, however, in a particular manner, just as he died in a particular manner. The sepulcher of Christ was an aperture in a rock, a hole in a rock, a cavity hewn out of a natural rock, so that there was no approaching the sepulcher of Christ but by the mouth of it; there was no undermining it; there was no sapping and mining it, by which the corpse might have been abstracted, by which it might have been taken away some other way than the way it was put in; there was no way of the body getting out of the grave but by the way it got in, namely, by the mouth of the sepulcher. But the mouth of the sepulcher was shut up, sealed up, fortified with a great stone rolled against its mouth. That stone was sealed with the royal arms, the imperial signet was attached to the stone; the sepulcher of Christ was hermetically sealed; so that it was supposed it never could be infringed upon, never could be violated; and to make it still more inviolable, it was guarded by Rome's veteran legions. It was never denied, then, that Christ was buried.

There is another fact which was never denied either—and I want you to see the importance of these facts, and their bearing on the subject before us—namely, *that the sepulcher of Christ was empty on the third day.* That was allowed. The women found it empty; the angels found it empty; Peter and James found it empty; heaven found it empty; earth found it empty; hell found it empty; it was an empty sepulcher on the third day.

Then comes the fourth great fact in the series of these massive truths—the one now before us—*How came it empty?* That is the question, *How came it empty?* There are only two ways of accounting for the emptiness of the sepulcher of Christ: the one is, that the body which had occupied it had been stolen out of it; and the other way of accounting for the emptiness of the sepulcher is, that the body which had occupied it rose up out of it. *Stolen out of it!* Pray, who stole it? It must have been stolen, if stolen at all, by one of two descriptions of persons: it must have been stolen, if stolen at all, either by the friends of Christ, or by the enemies of Christ. It must have been stolen, if stolen at all, first, by the *enemies* of Christ. Now, what did the enemies of Christ want to do with his body? *They* would never steal his body; they had put his body to death that it might perish—that his name and history might be scandalized and blotted out. Besides, if *they* had stolen it out of the sepulcher, they might have produced it; it would have been to be found; it would have been to be seen. And if the enemies of Christ did not steal it, if stolen at all, it must have been stolen by his *friends*. But were *they* likely to do it? What good would it do them? Were they in a situation to spoliate the tomb of Arimathea? A handful of fishermen, a frightened exciseman, and a shopkeeper, were they in a situation to overpower Rome's hardy soldiers, who had faced field and flood? Were half a dozen men and women in a situation to

overmaster the forces that guarded the sepulcher in which the body of Jesus lay? I think, then, we must be prepared to admit that the body was not stolen out of the sepulcher; the emptiness of the sepulcher cannot be accounted for in that way: and if so, then there is no other way of accounting for the emptiness of the sepulcher but by adopting the language of the text: "The angel said unto the women, . . . He is not here: for *he is risen;*" he *was* here, he *has been* here, he *did* lie here, but "He is not here" now—"*He is risen!*" Not "He is *stolen*"—"He *is risen!*" he is gone up out of the grave. "Come, see the place where the Lord lay."

Now the resurrection of our Saviour, here affirmed by the *angels*, is noticed by the *apostles; they* bear testimony to this truth. And you will remember they were not very forward *themselves* to believe it at first. When people are very much prejudiced in favor of a thing, they are, in general, very easily brought to admit the truth of the thing. But with the apostles the case was quite opposite. It is true, they had some intimation that Christ would rise again; but unbelief covered their minds. They were overpowered by this one great misleading error, which prevailed among the Jews in general, and from which they were by no means free—they expected that the Messias would be a temporal monarch; they looked for something worldly and political from him. But when they found he was crucified, dead, and buried, their hopes were buried with him; they said they

*thought*, they had *some hope*, that he who had been working such miracles, and uttering such sayings, as he had, was he that should have redeemed Israel; but now their hopes had fled, and they abandoned the cause as hopeless. They were not, therefore, very forward to admit the resurrection of Christ: nay, when the women announced the event to the apostles they ridiculed what the women said, it seemed as so many idle words: nay, afterward when the Saviour appeared to the apostles themselves, they at first doubted; they thought it was a spirit; they could not admit that it was Christ; and not till they had handled him, felt him, touched him, talked with him, eat with him, sung with him, did they believe that it was verily Jesus of Nazareth, who had been crucified on Calvary.

It is clear, then, that they would not have believed themselves in the resurrection of Christ if the evidence of its truth had not been overpowering and irresistible; nothing less than the certainty of the fact could ever have made them to believe that it had taken place.

Nor, if the resurrection of Jesus had been any thing but a fact, could they have persuaded *other people* to have believed it. And yet they *did* persuade other people to believe it; they went forth preaching Jesus and the resurrection; and although the world was up in arms against Jesus and the resurrection, these men announced the thing they affirmed, they averred—they declared it, they sware it, they attested it from Dan

to Beersheba, from Jerusalem round about unto Illyricum; from one end of the world to the other they went proclaiming Jesus and the resurrection: and there was such integrity about their look, such firmness about their tone, such moral suasion about their manner, that, although the world was at first against it, the world believed it at last; but they would never have believed it if it had not been true.

Now observe who the persons were who bore testimony to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. They were not persons who were not competent to the thing. Christ appeared not to all men, because all men were not in a situation to bear testimony to that fact. It would not have been a valid testimony for a man to say that he had seen him alive *after* his crucifixion, if he had seen him only *once* before the crucifixion; because the man might have been mistaken. The men who bore testimony to the resurrection of Jesus were men who had been with Christ three years and a half, attending him in all his journeyings, gazing upon him in the performance of all his miracles, listening to all his sermons; they were familiar with the tones of his voice, with the features of his face, with the gestures of his body; they knew him as perfectly as you know your father, or your mother, or your sister, or your brother. It was a physical impossibility that they could be mistaken in the person of Jesus Christ; and, therefore, we are told that he appeared after he came from the dead to chosen witnesses, to infallible men—to those

who had been intimate with his life, all his ways, all his looks, all his manners—who knew all about him before his crucifixion; and these were the men who declared he was alive, and that it was the same person whose voice they had heard, and on whose miracles they had gazed.

There is another thing concerning the testimony which was borne by the apostles; and that is, *the time* at which they announced it. They did not keep the thing secret a long time, and then, when the judge was dead who condemned him, and the executioners were dead who slew him, and the soldiers were dead who stood around the grave—when the whole million and a half of people, who (as a great German critic has shown) were at the foot of Calvary when Jesus gave up the ghost—when there was such a great multitude assembled as had never before been gathered together on a similar occasion; the testimony was not withheld till all this was done—till Pontius Pilate, and Herod, and the Pharisees and scribes were dead: *on the third day* after the crucifixion of Jesus—no more than that—three days after, while the streets were still sprinkled with the blood of him of Calvary, while the stones were wet with the tears of him of Nazareth, while the heart of Pilate was throbbing because of the anxious consideration which had been forced upon him in reference to Jesus of Nazareth; while every thing was fresh, present, lively,—while the popular feeling was at its very height,—then, *just then*, did the apostles affirm that Christ was risen from the dead.

Then you will be so good as to consider also *the place* where the testimony was given. They did not go away over seas, and carry the fact to some distant part of the world that had no connection with Jerusalem; they did not go away into some deep glen, to some inaccessible cave, to some part of the earth where examination could not follow them, where the falsehood could not be set right. They said it in the hall of Pontius Pilate, the very place where he had been condemned; they said it in the pretorium, the very spot on which he had been scourged; they said it on Calvary, the very place where he had been crucified; they said it in Bethlehem; they said it in Capernaum; they said it in all the places where Christ had been a few days, a few months, a few years before. Now, when falsehood is propagated, people sometimes carry it to a distance, to some place where the thing did not take place, where all the circumstances were not present which could throw light upon it. But here is no falsehood, but truth —demonstrative truth.

There is one other circumstance which it is exceedingly worthy to notice, touching this part of the matter; and that is, that the evidence borne by the apostles, concerning the fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, can be accounted for on no other ground but *their belief of the fact.* When persons propagate falsehood, they have some object in view in doing it,—either to gratify their ambition, or their avarice, or their pride,—some end of gain, or emolument, or ease, or re-

nown. But, pray, what was the motive which could have influenced the apostles to give this testimony concerning the resurrection of Christ? Was it any love of ease? Why, they had no ease: they went up and down, here and there, carrying the message from one end of the globe to the other. Was it a love of power or ambition which influenced them? Truly, they never attempted to grasp an earthly scepter; they said the kingdom of Christ was not of this world. Was it a love of pomp, of affluence, of emolument —was it a love of any thing which this world is in the habit of accounting valuable? No! one of them acknowledged, in the name of all the rest, "Silver and gold we have none." Was it a love of pleasure? Why, we know that their very announcement of the fact exposed them to persecution, to torture, to death: their names were cast out as evil; they were hunted up and down as wild beasts; they were burned, they were scourged, they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were thrown to the lions. What could have impelled these men to make this testimony, when they secured nothing by it but loss of fame, reputation, liberty, life itself—every thing that a man counts dear? But, in the face of terror, martyrdom, racks, gibbets, fires, blood, they announced, they declared, they maintained, that He who was crucified on Calvary was alive again, and that they had seen him.

Now, I have been saying, in the first place, that unless these men *themselves* believed the resur-

rection of Christ—unless they had been convinced of it themselves, they would never have believed it; and I have been saying, in the second place, that, unless it had been true, they could never have made *other people* believe it. And yet the doctrine prevailed here and there, in this place and that. Philosophers felt that the evidence was irresistible; magicians were conquered by the charm; princes acknowledged the truth of it: it was affirmed at length in the senate-house of Rome, in the palace of the Cesars, as a thing indubitable, a thing irrefragably, incontrovertibly true. "He is not here,"—then, as the angel said —"for he is risen, as he said: Come, see the place where the Lord lay."

We have thus noticed the evidence which we have of our Saviour's resurrection, and I may say that I have noticed it principally for the sake of the young people of the congregation. I am quite aware that to many of you it is not necessary to go into any minute detail with regard to the evidences of the great fact; but still I conceive it to be a matter of very great importance, that all who name the Christian name, and profess the Christian religion, and avow their attachment to it, should be acquainted with the evidence on which the great facts making up that religion repose: and, at any rate, the younger part of our families, the younger portion of our congregations, have need to be instructed in these evidences, and to be made familiar with them; that when, in the highway of life, they are met with

infidel objections—when they come to brush along the road with their fellowmen, and come to be taunted, ever and anon, with this objection and that, they may not be without their defense; they may not be without their shield; that they may be able to confront the objections of the infidel; that they may be able to bring out of their quivers arrows of celestial truth—arrows of majestic force, the points of which never were, and never can be, blunted.

II. Passing this, I proceed, in the second place, to notice the VAST IMPORTANCE OF THE RESURRECTION.

I suppose that last Friday, either in this or some other place, you were glorying in the *cross* of Christ: this day we are glorying in the *resurrection* of Christ. There is a danger lest we should make too little of the resurrection of Christ. The apostle says, in that triumphant challenge in the eighth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea, rather,"—*rather!* Why *rather?* Why is the emphasis *there?* "It is Christ that died; yea, rather, *that hath risen again.*"

1. Now, in the first place, we are to "come and see the place where the Lord lay," because in that empty sepulcher we find a *confirmation of the character of Christ himself.* The resurrection of Christ confirmed the character of Christ. Christ was the Messias, but he was not admitted to be so

by every body. "A good name is a jewel." "A good name is better than ointment." "A good name is better than choice silver." It was no less valuable to Jesus Christ than to any one else; but his name was cast out as evil; he was represented as a deceiver; he was represented as an impostor; he was represented as a drunkard; he was represented as a demoniac, as a madman; they said all manner of evil against him. He said of himself, "I am Messias—I am Christ—I am the son of God—I am the light of the world—I am the Saviour of men." Is he, or is he not, the Messias? The resurrection determines the matter; the resurrection answers the question; the resurrection settles the dispute. The resurrection of Christ was affirmed in the Scriptures; it was prophesied of in ancient Scriptures. O, in what beautiful language was the very manner of our Saviour's burial foretold! It was said that he should "make his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death." And so he did: he was carried away from Calvary to Golgotha, the place of a skull—a place polluted with blood and bones—a place walled round, walled in, walled off, as a place where none entered but the filth of human nature, the dregs of humanity, the offscum of the race. He had "his grave with the wicked;" but the same prophecy said he should have "his grave with"—the *wicked?* No! his grave with the *rich*—"with the rich in his death." Who are those two men going to court, going to the governor, going to Pontius Pilate? Joseph and

Nicodemus—two rich men, two learned men, two official men, men of great renown, two men of vast consideration, two men of great influence. These two men begged the body of Jesus, and they gave him the burial of a rich man. So that, though he had "his grave with the *wicked*," he also had "his grave with the *rich*."

Then it was said that his body should not "see corruption"—that his soul should not remain in Hades—*in hell*, as it is rendered in the Bible and in the Prayer-book, though when they were translated the word simply meant the place of invisible spirits; not having the signification implied in the popular acceptation of the term, not merely the place of torment. Now it was foretold that he should not "see corruption"—that the "Holy One" of God should not "see corruption;" and yet it was foretold that he should die and be buried. Then the prophecy that he should not "see corruption" was a prophecy of his *resurrection:* because in that hot country the body perished invariably on the third day: corruption came on; not as with us in this cold latitude, in this remote part of the world, in this northern portion of the planet; but in that eastern latitude, where the heat was greater, where the heat was tropical, corruption took place on the third day: as the sister of Lazarus intimated when Jesus directed that the stone should be removed which covered the grave: "Lord," she said, "by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days;" the process of putrefaction has come on

in his solids and fluids, and, therefore, the difficulty of raising him is augmented. Now, it was said that Christ should not see corruption; therefore, it was said that he should be raised from the dead: and the Holy One of God saw no corruption, for on the morning of the third day he burst the bars of the sepulcher and started into life.

Our Saviour himself suspended his character on his resurrection. He did so on two celebrated occasions. On one occasion the Jews came to him, and, as they were wont, demanded a sign from him. "Sign!" said he, "you have had sign upon sign; and you shall have no other sign except this,—I give you this sign, and I suspend my character upon it; and if this sign is not verified, write me down an impostor; if this sign is not verified, then I am not the Messias." And what was the sign? He said, "As Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." But, as Jonas was vomited forth—as he did not find a grave in the whale's belly, but a house, a home, a place of safety; and as he came out of that house, and was vomited on the dry land on the third day; so, just so, shall the Son of man come out of the grave on the third day. That is the sign; "I give it you: I suspend my character upon it; I hang my reputation on it. If that sign does not meet its correspondence in my history your unbelief is innocent, and I am what you take me to be—an impostor."

But you know that though Jesus died, and was buried, and laid in the sepulcher—and though there was a great stone rolled against the mouth of the sepulcher, which was sealed with the imperial signet—you know it was all in vain. Vain! to be sure it was in vain. If they had pulled down the seven stars, and placed them upon the mouth of the sepulcher; if all the comets, and the planets, and the stars in the physical universe had been heaped on the sepulcher of Christ—if that had been at the bottom of them all; if all the masses of matter which float in the universe had been piled upon the body of Christ, tier on tier, Alps on Alps, to prevent the resurrection of it, it would all have been in vain, quite in vain: on the morning of the third day he would have burst the superincumbent pressure, for he was the Messias; and if he had not risen from the dead he would have been an impostor; it would have been giving credit to a lie. He said, "As Jonas came forth from the belly of the whale on the third day, so shall the Son of man come forth from the grave." And he accomplished this, and thus fulfilled the promise he had made, and his claims to the Messiahship were accomplished.

On another occasion he said to the Jews: "Destroy this temple,"—pointing to his body—"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will build it again." Now, he spoke of the temple of his body. The Jews thought, at first, that he spoke of the temple of Solomon; but he spoke of the temple of his body; and if that was destroyed,

on the third day he would raise it again. On that he hung his character; on that he suspended his claims; and when Jesus rose from the dead, it was announced, proclaimed, declared, throughout the universe, that he was verily the Messias, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world.

2. In the second place, the event of the resurrection of Jesus Christ is of great importance, inasmuch as *it proves the completeness of his sacrifice, and testifies to us that the Father has accepted that sacrifice as perfectly sufficient and valid.* Now, the sacrifice of Christ began to be poured out when he shed the first tear in the manger of Bethlehem: the first tears that Christ shed in the manger of Bethlehem were part of the sacrifice for the sin of the world. When Jesus came down from heaven to earth, Justice followed him. Justice followed him into the manger, and he wept in the manger. Justice followed him along the highway of life; and he bowed under the flashes of the sword of Justice. Justice followed him to the garden of Gethsemane, and there he sweat great drops of blood. Justice followed him to the hill of Calvary; Justice followed him to the darkness, and dreariness, and gloominess of the grave. And if Justice had not had its demands fulfilled, Christ would have been in his grave now. When the debtor is thrown into prison, and confined there, it is an acknowledgment that justice is not satisfied, that law is not at rest, that it is still under demand. But when the doors of the prison a e thrown open, and the prisoner walks abroad and

spreads himself in the light of the sun, and there is a welcome given him in the face of the universe, it is an intimation that, somehow or other, the demands of justice are met—it is an intimation that, somehow or other, law is satisfied, and vindicated, and honored. And had Christ's death not appeased Divine justice, and magnified the Divine law, there would have been no resurrection. But he "died for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification;" showing that thus he had satisfied the law, fulfilled it, and made it honorable. Because his death was a full and sufficient satisfaction, oblation, and atonement for the sin of the world, death could not, did not, hold him in the grave; and when he rose again to life and liberty, it was an acknowledgment that God was pacified, justice satisfied, the law magnified. O! Mercy's voice is now ringing all over the world, because Christ got up out of his sepulcher. A paragraph preceding the text speaks of the angel sitting on the great stone, which was rolled away from the mouth of the sepulcher. What a beautiful triumph was that! The angels took away the stone, and they sat upon the stone. But what do *we* see on the sepulcher itself? We see mercy waving her hand over it, and telling the world that because that sepulcher is empty, there is now salvation for guilty men. "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is *risen* again."

3. In the third place, the resurrection of Jesus Christ is of infinite importance, because *it proves the completeness of his triumph over all his enemies.*

The great enemy of Jesus Christ was the devil, Apollyon, Beelzebub, the liar of the universe, the grand deceiver, the arch apostate, the dragon. When Jesus entered on his great work, the devil, out of pure maliciousness, attempted to thwart him, to cross him, to circumvent him, to trip him up, to throw him down, to stop him from accomplishing the errand on which he had come from heaven down to earth. Satan had conquered in the *garden*, and he hoped, or thought, to conquer in the *wilderness;* but when he came into the wilderness to confront Immanuel, just after Immanuel's entrance on his great work, Satan received a shock, Satan was defeated. Still he returned to the encounter; he repeated it; he followed up Christ with this dark suggestion, and that dark suggestion, and the other dark suggestion: he employed every agency that he could, by possibility, influence. He instigated one of his disciples to betray him, another to deny him—all to forsake him. He instigated Pontius Pilate, against his conscience, to pronounce that extra-judicial, that non-judicial, that anti-judicial sentence against Jesus, by which he troubled his own mind immeasurably. Satan entered into Judas; Satan entered into Pontius Pilate; Satan entered into Herod; Satan entered into Peter; Satan was at work to upset the mission of the Messiah, to defeat the designs of mercy, to overturn the grand redeeming scheme of heaven. And when Jesus of Nazareth was laid in the rock of Joseph of Arimathea, when he was sealed up in that rock, I

suppose hell had never such exultation. O, the enemies of Christ rejoiced! the devils rejoiced! Satan rejoiced! but their rejoicing was short—very short. On the third morning, when Christ rose from the dead, Satan fell like lightning from heaven; and, however loud the shout had been when Jesus was in the hands of his enemies, which he was for three days, it was surpassed by the groan of defeat, of discomfiture, of disaster, of chagrin, of vexation, of disappointment, of mortification—the groan that was heard when Christ burst open the grave, and shook hell to its utmost verge, and to its inmost center. Christ conquered the devil, put his foot on the old serpent, and let all his captives go free.

4. Lastly, the resurrection of Jesus Christ is of infinite importance, because *it proves the completeness of his conquest over the last enemy—death; and was the pledge, the earnest, and the foretaste of our resurrection.* Mankind had always been impressed with a notion that there was some part of itself—something about a man, something in a man, somewhere or other, that would not die. They beheld man's body die and perish, but they believed there was something about man that would never perish. There was a notion of the immortality of the soul laid in the original structure of the mind of man, and paganism itself could never wholly extinguish that feeling. But man had *no* idea that the *body* would be raised: arts had never taught it; science had never discovered it; philosophy had never hinted it; the

grave of the body lay sealed, fastened, tied, closed up; and man considered that the body would never live again. But when Christ rose from the dead, then life and immortality were brought to light; then, as the mists flow down the mountain side when the sun arises in his majesty, so the uncertainty that hovered about the fortunes of the human body broke up and rolled away. I know there had been a resurrection before the resurrection of Christ; Jairus's daughter had been raised again, Lazarus had been raised again, the widow of Nain's son had been raised again, and many of them of Jerusalem had been raised again at the time of the crucifixion of Christ. But there is this peculiarity about all those cases—that *they all died again.* Lazarus died again, Jairus's daughter died again, and the son of the widow of Nain died again; those that came out of the tombs, and walked up and down at the crucifixion of Christ, died again. But Christ dies *no more;* when he once left the grave, he went back no more; he was seen and heard saying, "I have conquered death and hell." We may well say, in the language of the Apostle Peter, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away." The resurrection of Christ has begotten us to a lively hope of our own resurrection.

Death, my friends, is a mighty conqueror. He

has reigned from Adam to Moses with a despotic sway—from Moses to Christ with a tyrannical overbearing—from Christ to this hour with an awful power. There have been only two exceptions to his dominion, and the two exceptions prove the universality of the rule. One man, and one man only, was saved in the old world; and one man, and one man only, was saved in the new world—one man out of both worlds to tell us that all men shall live. With the exception of these two, Enoch and Elijah, all men have been compelled to yield to the touch of the black scepter of death. But when Christ entered the grave, death found that some one had come to enter the lists with him mightier than himself, more powerful than he was. Jesus

> "Entered the grave in mortal flesh,
> And dwelt among the dead."

But, because he was Jesus, because he was the Messias, because he had made atonement for the sin of the world, he could not be holden of death; but death gave up his prey, and Christ rose from the tomb, "the first-fruits of them that slept." And just as the first ripe ears of corn which grew on the plains and the mountain sides of Palestine were immediately brought into the temple, and waved before the Lord, as a pledge that every ear of corn standing on and growing in Palestine should be safely reaped and gathered in; so the resurrection of Christ is a demonstration that we, his people, shall be raised again. If we sleep in Jesus, God will bring us with him: because he

lives, we shall also live. Dry up your tears, then. Sometimes you go to the church-yard; sometimes you attend the remains of your relatives to their long homes; you go to "the house appointed for all living;" and sometimes you see the bones lying round the grave, and you are tempted to take them up, and ask, "Can these bones live? Can these dishonored, disheveled, denuded bones live? Can the dead live again?" "Come, see the place where the Lord lay." As surely as the sepulcher of Christ became an empty sepulcher, so surely the sepulchers of his people shall become empty sepulchers also; as surely as he got up and sung a jubilee of life and immortality, so surely shall his people come out of the grave. How beautifully has the prophet Isaiah expressed it! "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead. Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise."

What powerful instruction, then, is there conveyed to us in the fact of the resurrection of the dead! We may well celebrate it; we may well memorialize it; we may well talk of it to our children, sing of it in our hymns, read of it in our Bibles, preach of it in our sermons, observe it in our Christian ordinances. It is one of the grand primitive rocks of Bible truth.

In closing, I would just say, in the first place, *how thankful we ought to be that our faith is so fully confirmed.* We do not believe in cunningly-devised fables. Our rock is not as their rock, our enemies themselves being judges.

In the second place, if Christ is risen, *let us take care to rise with him.* "If ye, then, be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God;" but set them above, "where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." "Reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but be alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Let "your conversation be in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself."

Lastly, my friends, *let us anticipate the glories of the final resurrection.* Let us look forward to the general jubilee of the universe—to the time when every charnel-house shall be opened, and every grave unlocked, and every mausoleum be untenanted, and every cemetery emptied. The time is coming when "all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of condemnation."

Let me close with the words employed by the patriarch long ago—words worthy of the patriarch, worthy of being written on a rock with a pen of the diamond: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold."

# V.

## THE CITY OF REFUGE.

"That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.—HEBREWS vi, 18.

OF the grandeur of truth—of the origin of man's redemption—of the means whereby it has been procured—of the privileges which it confers upon the redeemed in this life, and the glories and beatitudes which it secures to them in the life to come,—these are the things, the knowledge of which belongs to our peace—things compared with which the gains of business, the accumulations of wealth, the splendors of science, the discoveries of philosophy, the charms of sense, are lighter than vanity, and less than nothing: for what is chaff to the wheat? What is the shadow to the substance? What is time to eternity? What is finite to infinite? What are the pleasures of sense which seduce and destroy the sons of vanity, compared with the pleasures of godliness, the joys of redemption?

The Epistle to the Hebrews—one of the substantial products of inspiration in the New Testament—has a specific value all its own: it throws a blaze of light on all the previous parts of Scripture: it is itself a standing finger-post to the Scriptures of the Old Testament; and lest any one should turn away from the Old Testament, as

though it were not fitted to nourish the faith, or feed the hope, or influence the love, or kindle the devotions of the man under the dispensation of the Gospel—lest any should turn away from it as though it were a mere element of a Christian school-boy, containing but the rudiments of Christian scholarship, the Epistle to the Hebrews is before us, a part of New Testament inspiration, which throws an everlasting interest over the Scriptures of the Old Testament. The two Testaments, indeed, are like the olive trees, planted in the courts of the house of the Lord, or like two golden candlesticks destined to shine for the light and guidance and safety and blessedness of the Church, so long as the Church militant shall last. Now, the chapter before us, from which I have taken the words of the text, abounds with references to the Old Testament Scriptures. "And we desire," says the apostle, at the beginning of the paragraph, "that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability

of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:"—then comes the text—"That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." And now your preacher will proceed to preach unto you Jesus.

"Forever his dear, sacred name
Shall dwell upon our tongue;
And Jesus and salvation be
The theme of every song."

And let me say to you at once, that if any of you are now lying in the pit of an unconverted state, the cords of salvation are let down to you, and taking hold of them, you may, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, be drawn up out of the pit into the life of the living. Consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding in these things!

I. Allow me to bring before your consideration THE VIEW GIVEN OF THE SAVIOUR IN THE TEXT. He is called "*the hope set before us.*"

In the Scriptures of truth we read of hope that is in us, hope that is laid up for us, and hope that is set before us. The happiness of heaven—heaven itself—its light and glory, its songs, and its blessedness—that is the hope laid up for us; that good work of the Holy Spirit's operation on the heart, here and now, whereby we look for the former, and for the earnest of it, is the hope that is in us: and our Lord Jesus himself, the only foundation

and hope, for sinner or for saint, for pardon or for holiness, is the hope set before us.

I need not inform my intelligent hearers that there is in the language I have read an obvious allusion to the institutions of the theocracy of the Jews, according to which there were certain cities provided and ordained for the reception and shelter of the manslayer. Fleeing to one of these desirable asylums from the fury of the avenger of blood, he was safe, his life secured, his person charmed, his body invulnerable, and all by the laws of the realm. A most expressive emblem were these cities of refuge under the law, of Christ Jesus under the Gospel. What the city of refuge was to the manslayer, that Christ Jesus is to the sinner. The cities of refuge under the law were the only legal places of shelter for the manslayer, and our Lord Jesus Christ himself is the only legitimate ground of hope for any of the sinners of mankind. But for him we have no hope. I do not say we have no feeling of hope--the feeling of hope may exist where the ground of hope does not; but I say that but for Christ Jesus we have no hope, no ground of hope at all as sinners. A few reflections of natural conscience, I think, will be sufficient to show you that as to the pardon of sin here, as to the happiness of the soul in the separate state hereafter, and as to the resurrection of the body in circumstances of beauty, immortality, and purity--that, as to these things, nature can give us no hope at all. As to the pardon of sin here, nature may sigh for it, cry for it, long for it, groan for it; but,

as Bishop Stillingfleet said—or, rather, Howe before him—there are many stars in the heavens, one teaching this and another that, one looking this way and another looking that way; but there is no star in the heavens pointing a poor sinner to a Saviour. Take the question, "What must I do to be saved?" Take it to nature in all her kingdoms, in all her realms, in all her laboratories, in all her chambers of mystery; take it here and there, and knock at every door, and put the question; but there is no response, no answer at all. Nature, philosophy, science, are all dumb to that great question, "What must I do to be saved?" As to the happiness of the soul in the separate state hereafter, nature can tell us nothing certain about that—it is fallible conjecture, not certain knowledge; ardent wish, not positive assurance—a feeble flickering, not undoubted, substantive, absolute revelation. And as to the resurrection of the body, after it has slept the sleep of a thousand generations—its resurrection in beauty, immortality, and glory—that is a doctrine so peculiar to revelation, that it never was once so much as dreamed of by any of the sages of antiquity as being contained within the whole circle of Divine truth. But, my brethren, my fellow-countrymen, my fellow-men, there is hope for all these things in the Lord Jesus Christ. O, thou hope of Israel! to whom shall we go but unto thee? Thou hast the words of eternal life. In the designation from all eternity of our Lord Jesus Christ to the work of substitution to our guilty race we see a rich

purpose of Divine mercy toward it, breaking up, developing itself, flowing off, running out, going away. In the incarnation of Christ in the fullness of time, we see the foundation laid on which the superstructure of our salvation—arch on arch, tier on tier, in all the loveliness of its Divine beauty, in all the fullness of its Divine perfection—is reared. In the suffering, cross, passion, death, and burial of our Lord Jesus Christ, we see the price and purchase of our redemption; in his triumphant resurrection, ascension, and intercession at the right hand of the Majesty on high, we see the pledge, pattern, and security of our salvation; while the revelation, the gift, the grant of all in this book and in this Gospel, sets before the hand of faith and the eye of hope salvation with eternal glory. So true as well as so beautiful, so just as well as so *metaphorical*, is the representation given in the text. He *is* emphatically the hope set before us.

II. I proceed to notice, for a moment, THE CONDUCT OF THE MAN DESCRIBED IN THE TEXT IN REFERENCE TO THIS BLESSED OBJECT. He is said to "*flee for refuge*," and to "*lay hold upon it.*"

In this there is an allusion to the institutions already referred to—namely, the flight of the manslayer to the city of refuge. Methinks I descry the manslayer looking behind him: he sees the avenger of blood—he sees the horrible burning frown upon his brow, he hears the dismal tramp of his feet—and away he flies! he stops not, turns not out of his course, but presses on, and on, with

accelerated speed, until at length, all panting and breathless, he enters the hallowed gates of the city of refuge and enters into peace. Such is the flight of the sinner's soul to the arms of Jesus Christ. This representation sets before us the case of a man struck with a conviction of guilt, smitten with an apprehension of danger, despairing of relieving himself, coming out of himself, and trusting to another. These are some of the steps which lie at the foundation of that great change which the Scriptures call conversion—salvation—that change which if a man undergoes not, it were better he had never been born. Not, indeed, that the sinner was always found in the attitude of flight toward the city of refuge. Formerly the sinner was easy in his sins. The secrecy of his sins, and the example of the multitude, the hope of a long life, the distance of the day of judgment; some loose notions of the mercy of God floating in his brain, coming he knew not whence, and leading he knew not whither;—to these things he looked for relief from his melancholy when it came over him—and sometimes it would come over him; or else, perhaps, he attempted to still the enemy and the avenger by plunging into scenes of mirth, and revelry, and dissipation. But now that the conscience of the sinner is under the arrest of the Holy Ghost—now that the thunders of Sinai are rolling around him, and the lightning flashes of indignation against sin are perceived by him—now stricken, smitten, convinced, convicted, he falls down, and he feels, just as I believe Adam felt in

the garden of Eden, on the back of his great offense, that he has nothing to screen him from the eye, or shelter him from the wrath, of Omnipotence. He looks this way and that way, before him and behind him, but there is no refuge for him!

At this period, observe the method of salvation by Jesus Christ in the Gospel unfold itself to his view. And O, what new charms he now discovers in that method! The very name of Jesus, which was before an insipid sound, is now to him like music. His soul leaps within him, to know that "God is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing to men their trespasses;" his heart dances for joy when he finds that "it is a faithful saying that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." But observe, his conviction of guilt and danger and ruin, being now no longer superficial, but pervading, individual, and thorough, he is not satisfied with this merely general representation of the matter; it is not now enough for him to know in so many general terms that God is merciful, and that Christ is a Saviour; he now narrowly pries into the whole affair—into the authority and commission of Christ to save, into his ability and qualifications to save, into his willingness and readiness to save. As to the authority and commission of Christ to save sinners, the awakened sinner is glad to find Jesus is God's Son, that God sent him into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. He now finds that Jesus

Christ is chartered to save, legalized to save, authorized to save.

> "Commissioned from his Father's throne,
> To make his grace to sinners known."

He hears, as it were, the voice coming from the more than immortal glory, saying, "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him; he shall show salvation unto all the nations." Having found a Saviour commissioned to save, he now looks unto his ability and qualifications to fulfill this commission; and all his anxiety on this subject is met and relieved by the four evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, who, like four trumpeters, are standing east, west, north, and south, telling men what Christ has done and suffered to save them. Led by these evangelists, he goes to Bethlehem, and sees the great sight there; and, entering into the stable, and looking into the manger, he sees the Aurora blush for the world's redemption; and as he gazes on the infant Jesus, he feels as if he could fill the manger with his tears. Led by the evangelists, he goes to the wilderness, and there watches the struggle between Christ and Satan. Satan had triumphed in the garden; he tried to triumph in the wilderness: he had conquered the first Adam; he labored mightily to conquer the second Adam. But Christ triumphed in the wilderness; Satan was routed, the head of the serpent was crushed, and the awakened sinner beholds the triumphant Saviour. Led by the evangelists, he goes on through his life, his miracles and sufferings. Pass-

ing through the garden of Gethsemane, he is conducted to the hill of Calvary, and he walks about it and about it, and there beholds the Lamb of God taking away the sins of the world. The sword of justice had a commission to smite the man that was Jehovah's fellow; it smote him in Bethlehem, it smote him all along the highway of his life, even to Calvary. On Calvary the strokes of the sword fell heavy; the glances of that sword then darkened the sun; the strokes of the sword shook earth, shook hell; it kept smiting and smiting the man that was God's fellow, till at last he cried, "It is finished." Then the sword fell down at the foot of the cross, hushed, lulled, pacified; and it lay there till the third hallowed morning, when it was found changed into a scepter of mercy, and that scepter of mercy has been waving among mankind ever since, and it is waving now; it is waving in this assembly; it is waving here that any one may stretch the hand, and touch the scepter, and whoever touches it shall live, and may live forever. Now, when he has found a Saviour able to save to the uttermost, he follows him; he sees him laid in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea; he watches there till the third hour of morning, when he sees the great stone rolled away; then he sees the Saviour rise, and hears him singing, "I have conquered death and hell; having overcome the sharpness of death, I open the kingdom of heaven to all believers." And now the awakened sinner sees the Saviour ascend, not carried away in a chariot of fire, not removed by a whirlwind,

not lifted off by any violent commotion of the elements of nature; but rising slowly, gradually, softly, breaking all the laws of gravitation and attraction, ascending up, up, up, until he reaches the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens: there he sits, for his work is done, his task is finished, his enterprise is completed; having purged our sins by his blood, he sits down at the right hand of the throne of God. I say again, the sinner has now found a Saviour mighty to save.

The only remaining point to be settled is this, "What warrant have I to believe that he will save me—a wretch like me? There may be salvation, but it may not be for the men in this part of the world; there may be salvation for some men in this part of the world, but there may not be salvation for me; there may be salvation for some of this congregation, but is there salvation for me?" This is settled by the discovery which the awakened sinner now makes of the freeness and the fullness of the Gospel, by discovering that Christ came to save sinners, not because they deserved, but because they needed his interposition; and the clearer, the deeper, the stronger is his conviction of being a sinner, the clearer, the wider, and the straighter does the road open before him to go to God for salvation. And now the battlements of the city walls are just coming fully to view; and, as the manslayer would promptly disencumber himself of every thing which would impede his flight or retard his progress to the city of refuge, so the awakened sinner now puts away the only

two things that can hinder any man out of hell from being saved—his sins and his self-righteousness. His sins he breaks off by true repentance; and as to his relf-righteousness, what things were gain to him he now counts loss for Christ. The city being full in view, away he flies; and, coming to Jesus, and clasping his feet, he says, "Blessed Jesus, I come to thee! Thou art my refuge, I lean my helpless soul on thee! on thee, my high tower, I build my hope! on thee, my rock, I place my foundation! Thou art the Prophet—thy teaching shall be my light! thou the Priest—thy atoning death shall be my justifying righteousness! that, sprinkled with thy blood, when the destroying angel goes by I may be saved. Thou King of Zion! I embrace thee, I acknowledge thee, I bow down before thee, and in token of reverence and love, I kiss the Son." Now he has got within the city, and has "a strong consolation."

III. I now advance to the last part of my subject—THE PRIVILEGE AND HAPPINESS OF THOSE WHO HAVE THUS FLED TO CHRIST JESUS FOR REFUGE. "By two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie," they have "*a strong consolation.*"

1. *What is consolation?* It is the relief of the mind under any trouble or pain; or the presence and enjoyment of a good which is able to prevent altogether, or else carry away and bear down before it, as in a full tide or flowing stream, all evil felt or feared. Two things would occur to the mind of the manslayer in connection with his

flight to the city of refuge. One would be: "Is it true—is it really, absolutely, incontrovertibly true—that if I get to the city of refuge the avenger dares not, must not touch me?" The other would be: "Suppose I get to the city, and am secure against the stroke of the avenger, what kind of accommodation and provision shall I find within that city?" These two things would occur to him on his way to, or on his arrival at, the city of refuge; and if he had had any doubt or uncertainty as to the one or the other, he would have been overwhelmed with confusion, perplexity, and dismay. But he had no doubt; he knew, he was certain, he was quite sure, that if he got to the city of refuge the avenger could not touch him, that he would be as safe in the city as if he were in heaven. He also knew that if he got to that city, and should remain in it, all his wants would be supplied, every thing necessary for his accommodation and support would be provided for him. Thus he had consolation. Now, apply these two things as an illustration of the nature of the happiness of believing in Christ. "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." "They that believe enter into rest." "Who is he that shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." What is it you are afraid of? Is it the justice of God? I know the justice of God has the impenitent sinner by the throat, and says, "Pay me what thou owest!" But I know also that the hand of the penitent sinner lays hold on the hope set before him, and justice takes his hand

off. It must be so; otherwise God were unrighteous in demanding two payments for one debt. "He that believes shall be saved." "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." What are you afraid of? Is it of the fiery law? The law is not roaring after you if you have got into the city of refuge; it is not uttering its tremendous maledictions against you if you have laid hold of the hope set before you. If you hear any thing at all of the demands of the law, it is the echoes of those demands dying away amid the battlements of the city wall; for he to whom you have fled, and on whom you have laid hold, has "magnified the law and made it honorable." Then what is it you are afraid of? Is it of the roaring lion of hell? He is indeed "going about seeking whom he may devour:" but your faith in Christ is a shield wherewith you will quench the fiery darts of the wicked one. Then what is it you have to fear? Is it death? You may give up that fear along with all the other fears; for Jesus, to whom you have come, on whom you have laid hold, has put down death, abolished it, and buried it in his own grave, and has brought life and immortality to light. That is consolation, but that is not the whole of it. I said that the consolation of the manslayer on reaching the city of refuge would also include an assurance that he should be provided for, while there, with every thing necessary for his accommodation and support. This answers to the other half—the happiness of believing in Christ—which consists in the infinite

assurance that God has given the believer that he never shall want any manner of thing that is really good, and that he never shall be in inextricable danger. "The young lions do lack, and suffer nunger?" and well they may; "but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing." Can that man want water who lives on the brink of an everlasting spring? Can that man want light who lives in the center of an everlasting sun? No more can you who are in Christ by the power of living faith want any thing really good; for he to whom you have come, and on whom you have laid hold, is the great repository of all conceivable and inconceivable good, for "it hath pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell." This is happiness; this is consolation.

2. Now look at *the grounds on which this consolation rests.* We have it, says the apostle, "by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie." What are these immutable things? Where are they to be met with? We cannot write the word immutable on the rock, it is constantly wearing away: nor on the sun; the sun himself shall grow old and dull. But there are two immutable things: the word of promise, and the oath of God. These are called the "counsel of God," to intimate that his promise is the declaration of his counsel. Promises very often are the result of any thing but counsel; but the promise of God is the counsel of God, the manifestation and publication of his counsel. You will observe the apostle refers to God's promise to Abraham

And what did God say to Abraham? "Fear not Abraham, I am thy shield." What is a shield? It is an instrument of defensive warfare, interposed between the body of the man and that of his antagonist, so that before the weapon can touch the man it must go through the shield that is before him. Think of this thy security, O Christian, while thou dost lay hold on the hope set before thee. Before thy enemies can do thee real harm they must pierce through Omnipotence. God says, "I am thy shield." Perhaps you ask what you have to do with the promise made to Abraham. Why, just as much as he had, at any rate. It is the design of the apostle in quoting it to show that if you have like precious faith with Abraham, you have also like precious promises. The promises of God, what are they like? Whereunto shall I compare them? They are like so many silver cords let down from heaven, hanging out from the pavilion of infinite clemency—I had almost said, sent down from the heart of God itself—for the hand of faith to lay hold on. The promise of God is an immutable thing, and by that we have our consolation. But there is another ground of this happiness. What! Another? Another "immutable thing?" Yes, another. Would you have thought it? No, you would not. Yet there is another. What! another? Yes; another "immutable thing." What! is not the promise of God enough? Is not the counsel of the inviolable Jehovah sufficient? Yes; enough for him,—quite enough for him, but not for you, you doubting

Christian, you miserable Christian. God, knowing the million ills of human life, the million jealousies of the human heart,—knowing the backwardness of your mind, and the slowness of your heart to believe his own eternal word of promise, hath condescended to superadd to that his solemn oath. O! that oath of God. "This is as the waters of Noah unto me; for, as I have sworn that the waters of Noah shall no more fall upon the earth, so have I sworn that I will not be wrath with thee, nor rebuke thee. The mountains may depart, the hills may be removed, but my loving-kindness will I not take away from thee, O Jacob, saith the Lord." That oath of God, what is it? What can God swear by? Men swear by supreme authority, —superior authority,—a jurisprudence above the party swearing; but by what can God swear? "Because there was no greater, he sware by himself." His word swore by his truth,—his truth swore by his faithfulness,—his faithfulness swore by his justice. He swore by himself. O! the condescension of God, the stooping of God! This is a stretch of condescension beyond which I had almost said the goodness of God cannot go. What is that oath like? Whereunto shall I compare it? Is it not as if Jehovah was laying all the perfections of his nature,—staking the very glory of the Godhead,—on the truth of his promise previously made? These are the two immutable things by which we have our consolation.

3. Let me mention *the quality of this happiness.* It is called in the text, a "strong consolation;" a

consolation among the most solid and substantial, the most abundant and efficient; a consolation available for every exigency of life, for the solemnity of death, for the crisis of the judgment day. How strong is this consolation? It is stronger than the afflictions of life. If, like Job, you are called to sit among ashes, and are borne down by grief and sorrow; yet, with this consolation, you will bless God. If, like the man who is believed to have written the words of the text, you had your feet made fast in stocks with prisoners; yet, with this consolation, you would sing praises to God at midnight. What a powerful principle religion is! It turns the dungeon into a gate of heaven, the place of stocks into a vestibule of glory. If, like the Hebrews, to whom the language was originally addressed, you were called to bear the spoiling of your goods for Christ's sake; with this consolation, you would bear it joyfully. Soaring on the wings of grace, you may defy the power of affliction, calamity, sickness, and change. He, whose word of promise and solemn oath you have, has said he will be with you "in six troubles; yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee." Strong consolation! How strong? Stronger than the dread of wrath. Ah! there is no fear like the fear of hell-fire; no dread like the dread of the wrath to come. Many a man has that fear who never said he had it; many a man's heart has that dread, who never told any Christian minister or any Christian friend of it. Now and then, when a man dies out of the city of refuge, feeling himself out of it, having the

command of language, and unable to repress his emotions,—now and then, in such a case, language escapes that fills the bystanders with alarm. I know how they get over it; they say it is delirium. If it were not for the stupefying effect of medicine, or the still more stupefying effect of disease, such would be the terror of the man dying out of the city of refuge, and feeling himself out of it, that if he expressed his feelings, his language would be such that no wife, no sister, no mother, no apothecary, no physician could bear to be in the room or near him. O, what a mountain is gone when the fear of hell is gone! O, what a load is removed from the human spirit when the dread of the wrath to come is removed! And it is removed from the man who has fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before him. Strong consolation! How strong? It is not only stronger than all the afflictions of life, and stronger than the dread of the wrath to come, but stronger than the fear of death. Hear the proverb of Solomon. He says, "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness; but the righteous hath hope in his death." Go and see the righteous die. Death has come in at the window, laying his hand upon the heart, freezing up the life-blood of the fountain. Death is there, but Christ is there also. Death, the last enemy, is there; but Christ, the Lord of life and glory, is there too. Death is there as the servant; Christ as the master. And now the soul of the believer takes its flight out of the body. I was going to say, that the flight of the soul of the believer out

of the body into the arms of Christ is not in winter, when light is scarce, and when the road is rough and rugged, but it is upon the Sabbath day; for, let a believer die on whichever day of the seven he may, his dying is to him a Sabbath, for on that day he enters into rest. "I heard a voice from heaven saying, Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord." Strong consolation! How strong? Stronger than all the terrors of the final judgment, than the desolations of universal nature. The sun that has shone so gloriously for thousands of years over our earth, and seas, and skies, will one day shine no more; and the moon, that has known the times of her rising and setting, and that with such mathematical precision and accuracy, will be turned into blood; the stars will fall from their orbits as figs fall from the fig-tree when in seasons of tempest it is shaken with an untimely wind. Then the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised. And where is the believer? How does he appear? Hearing in his grave the last tones, the death-sounds of the physical universe, the knell of the solar system—they are like music to him; they fall on his ear as welcome as the sound of the evening bell to the weary laborer at the close of the day, telling him that the hour of labor and fatigue and anxiety is over and gone. He awakes, he dresses; he robes for the marriage supper of the Lamb; he comes out of his grave; he sees the great white throne, and Him that sits on it; and he says, "Lo! this is our God; we may rejoice and be glad in his salvation;" and he goes up, and

is forever with the Lord. Strong consolation! Do not imagine, however, that the consolation thus exists strong in the feeling of every Christian always. It is liable to fluctuation; it fluctuates from a thousand causes—from the state of the weather, from the force of temptation, and from many influences that affect either the body or the mind. But what I mean to say is this—that so long as the Christian has hold of the hope set before him, the ground never gives way under his feet. And do not imagine, on the other hand, that I am an apologist for that low, stinted, dwarfish mode of religious joy so common among us. Why are you not happy, Christians? Why are you not happy, Christian professor, when God has done so much to make you happy? Why should you be miserable? Why should you hang down your head like a bulrush, you miserable, you doubting Christian? I will tell you. You are like a man going through the hot sandy deserts of Arabia, the atmosphere of which is like the atmosphere of red hot stones, his tongue cleaving to the roof of his mouth, his parched lips burning with fever;—there he goes trampling on the burning sands, and all the while he has in his hand a cup of cold, crystal water, but he never puts it to his lips. Why do not you drink? "Why art thou cast down, O my soul?" Go and say,—"Ashamed of the infatuation of unbelief—ashamed of this monstrosity,—I will expect the purity of my nature, triumph over the world, victory over the grave, conquest over Satan, a glorious resurrection, and the

life eternal of the world to come; I will expect it, and all through Him who loved me, died for me, and rose again for me, whose I am, and to whom I give myself now, to be his only, and his forever." That is the happiness resulting from faith in Christ.

Now, before I close, let me change my voice—let me alter my address. Are you all within the city of refuge? Have you entered that city? Have your eyes seen this salvation? Or are you dribbling life away in folly? Are you living in sin? How goes this question with you? I must say, I fear there are many in this assembly who are not within the city of refuge. Then, are you on the way to it? I must say, that I fear there are some here who are not even in the attitude of flight toward the city. My fellow-countrymen, my fellow-sinners, if you are not in the city, if you are not in the attitude of flight toward it, you are living in peril; every moment the avenger is behind you. You say you do not hear the sound of his footsteps. No, you live in such a fever, with so little Bible reading, so little self-scrutiny, so little prayer. You live in a hurry, you live in a fever; and suffer me to tell you, whether you hear the sound of the footsteps of the avenger or not, he is behind you, he is following you; and if he overtake you before you reach the city, sinner, you are lost! God Almighty save you! You must be saved by flight. Why should you not flee? The gates are opened, the road is clear, the invitation is affectionate. Why should you not flee thither?

Many have done so. Manasseh, that infuriated ruffian and adulterer, fled thither; why may not you? Mary Magdalene, who had seven devils, fled thither; why may not you? Zaccheus, the publican, fled thither; why may not you? Thousands upon thousands of the guiltiest of the guilty, and myriads upon myriads of the vilest of the vile, have fled thither, and have all found a rock for the trembling foot, and a canopy for the guilty head,—and yet there is room. Fly, sinner, fly! Make haste! Are you not ready to come to Christ? The Bible is ready, the Gospel is ready, the Saviour is ready, salvation is ready, are not you? Death is ready to seize you, judgment to overwhelm you, eternity to embrace you. Don't, don't go about to seek for a righteousness your own. You might as well try to get a river up a mountain-side, or attempt to walk the starry firmament of heaven with your clay feet, as to make a righteousness of your own. Look this way. Christ, Christ is the hope set before you. "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, Jesus Christ." "Neither is there given under heaven a name among men whereby we may be saved," but the name of Christ. Cannot you come to Christ? You may come to him now, before you go home, before you leave your seat.

> "Come all the world; come, sinner, thou,
> All things to Christ are ready now."

Have you come? Have you got to the city? Christ meets you at the gates, and he says to you

just what David said to Abiathar, "Abide thou with me, fear not: for he that seeketh my life seeketh thy life: but with me thou shalt be in safeguard."

Instead of addressing you longer, I suppose I ought rather now to thank you for having listened so long as you have done with so much attention. I have brought nothing new to your ears; and yet I have brought something new, for the Gospel is always new; it is never old and never cold; its doctrines never grow antiquated, its principles never shrivel up, its facts never decay and collapse; they are as fresh to-day as they were a thousand years ago, and they will be as fresh a thousand years hence as they are to-day. The glory of the Gospel is that, like its Author, it is "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." I look upon this assembly with profound emotion. You are here from all provinces of the country; and if you were the representatives of the whole world, I should have nothing else to say but what I have said to you. This is the Gospel for all mankind. Meet a man where I will, meet him in Exeter Hall, meet him in the so-called church or chapel, meet him as a beggar on the way-side, meet him as an advocate pleading before a judge, meet him in the capacity of a judge seated on the bench, meet him on the throne of a monarch—meet him where I will, and as I will, in whatsoever condition or phase, in whatever meridian of longitude or line of latitude, this one Gospel is the thing for him. There are not two Gospels; there are not two Sav-

iours; there are not two ways of salvation: this is the Saviour—this the way of salvation.

I must say that I think some place like this should have been thrown open into which those who have come up to the capital from the provinces can meet together for worship. You see each other, you come together, the law of sympathy takes effect, brotherhood prevails, fraternization is felt, and you clasp your arms together around the Gospel. This is the very thing you want. Does music suit the ear, entering into the cavity, flowing along the channels reaching to the brain, and acting thence upon the soul?—does music fit the ear? Does light fit the eye—coming off from the body of the sun, passing over objects in its way, entering the eye, acting through the brain upon the soul? How beautifully the light fits the eye! Does the key fit the lock, turning its wards, shooting its bolts, and removing all obstructions? Music does not fit the ear, the light does not fit the eye, the key does not fit the lock, so well as the Gospel fits the sinner. All the hollows in him are filled with the prominences of the Gospel. I have preached the Gospel to you—at least, I trust I have—at least, I believe I have—at least, I feel I have. I hand it over to you; and I trust I shall find it again, in a blade of repentance here, a stalk of faith there, and a ripe sheaf of holiness up yonder. May God bless his word! Amen.

## VI.

## THY KINGDOM COME.

"Thy kingdom come."—MATTHEW vi, 10.

MAN is a selfish being since his fall. So much does selfishness cleave to human nature, that many philosophers have affirmed that every human action is the product of self-love. This principle is so inwoven with our nature, so entwined with the very essence of our being, that it can only be subverted by a principle mightier than itself; and no principle mightier than itself has ever been found, except the principle that the Gospel makes known, the principle of love—love to God, love to Christ. The Gospel is the antidote to selfishness; its doctrines are all against selfishness, its facts are all opposed to selfishness, its precepts are all antagonists to selfishness, its very prayers are all opposed to selfishness. This prayer—the Lord's prayer, the child's prayer, the man's prayer, the morning prayer, the evening prayer—enjoins benevolence of the highest order.

"After this manner," Christ said to his disciples—"After this manner, pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven . . . For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen." This prayer, no doubt, was intended to be used frequently as a *form* of prayer; but, perhaps, it was

still more designed to be the *example* of our prayers—to be a model after which our prayers are to be formed and fashioned—to teach us the subjects of prayer—to teach us the order of arrangement among the subjects of prayer.

This prayer is like seed; which seed, when sown, yields thirty, sixty, or a hundred fold: so this prayer has in it the seeds of all devotion, which are to germinate in our minds and hearts. And from this summary of prayer we are to gather the materials of our devotion, and the order in which to express our wishes. To change the figure, this prayer is like Aaron's rod, which, when it was laid up all night, became fruitful, and in the morning was covered with buds and blossoms, and had brought forth abundantly: so this prayer, laid up in the mind, then living in the heart, acted upon by the influence of the Holy Ghost, buds and blossoms, and brings forth abundantly.

What a difference there is between the man that prays and the man that never prays—between the infidel and the believer! The infidel would environ, and smother, and crush what we call, what we *believe*, what we *feel* to be the truth. Yes, he accuses us by our folly, our fanaticism, and our enthusiasm, of turning the world upside down. He scoffs, and raves, and ridicules our grand, benevolent, majestic, heaven-planned enterprise. But how is it with the Christian, with the believer, with him to whom the kingdom of God has come with power? He longs for the diffusion of it; he prays that this kingdom may stretch far and wide.

Looking beyond him, and around him, he sees the darkness extending in every direction, having upon it all manner of abominable marks of cruelty, licentiousness, falsehood, and misery; and having his own spiritual substance, his own moral nature, touched, thrilled, warmed, dilated, ennobled by the Gospel, he longs and labors for its propagation upon earth.

No man liveth to himself. The worldling—there he is, vegetating upon the earth, a libel upon the reformed and opened front which he wears; there he is, absorbing every thing, distributing nothing—imbibing every thing, dispensing nothing; and, as it has been well said, greedy as the sea, but barren as the shore. But the Christian is one of the multitude; he loves himself with the brotherhood, the neighborhood of mankind; he feels himself one of the thousands about him, one of the millions of the species, and he longs for the universal circulation of that light, truth, and joyful sound with which himself has been favored: in short, he adopts the prayer which is before us; and when his feelings are most powerfully excited, and his sympathies most thoroughly stirred, then with his joyous feelings agitated, there is no prayer to which he is wont to partake himself more generally or more earnestly than to this prayer. The foulest forms of human woe excite his warmest sympathy; they fill his soul with mournful cries, and draw out all his heart in prayer. And in what prayer oftener or more earnestly than the prayer of the text? "Our Father which art in

heaven, thy kingdom come: for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory."

Our remarks shall turn, *first*, on the kingdom itself here referred to: "Thy kingdom." *Secondly*, on some of the many grounds on which the pious mind may look and pray for its coming and glory. And then, *thirdly*, if time shall permit, we may notice some of the encouragements peculiar to the moments in which we are living and acting, to excite the Christian Church to employing this prayer with more than ordinary zeal and love. And may the Hearer of prayer assist us with the Spirit!

I. The Kingdom itself,—the kingdom of God: a kingdom of which we should have known nothing but for revelation; but of which now that revelation has made us acquainted with it, we feel as though we could never know enough.

The phrase "*kingdom of God*,"[2] is like some other New Testament phrases, employed with some variety of signification—all the varieties, however, having a common relation. Sometimes the expression, "kingdom of God," implies the subjects of Christ's scepter, the aggregate, the multitude of the "called, and faithful, and chosen," —that part of them that are on earth. And then it is called the kingdom of Christ in the *world;* and, at other times, that part which has arrived already in *heaven*—and then it is called the kingdom of *glory*. Sometimes the expression intimates the unearthly genius or constitution of Christianity; as where the Saviour says, "My kingdom is

not of this world." At other times the expression implies the privileges, and endowments, and enjoyments experienced and exemplified under the administration of Messias: as, "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." At other times it implies the simple Gospel message, the announcement of revealed truth—the dispensation, the promulgation of the Gospel itself: as, where it is said, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."

In the passage before us we are to understand that dominion, that holy dominion, which God is setting up in the human heart, in the human world, in and by the Messias; a kingdom of which all time, since its early dawn, hath been the duration, of which mankind are the subjects, of which salvation is the object, of which the glory of the Triune God is the final end.

1. This kingdom *is not a worldly kingdom;* and yet the Jews, among whom the Saviour dwelt when he was manifest in the flesh, expected such a kingdom at the hands of the Messias; and the apostles themselves were not free from this misleading master delusion. And it was a fond dream, a fascinating delusion, a beautiful speculation, an intoxicating notion, which enwrapped the minds of the Jews, and infected the apostles themselves previous to the day of Pentecost; the idea that the Jewish people were to be restored to their secular political rank; the thought of the recovery

of the nation's sunken renown, of the reclamation of her forfeited distinctions, the idea of the evaporation of the sad clouds that covered the beauty of the daughter of Zion—of enthroning, robing, and adorning her, and making her again to sit as a queen among the nations. But Christ said, "My kingdom is not of this world." Other objects brought down the Son of God from heaven to earth than the establishment of secular domination. He looked down on our world; he saw prejudice tyrannizing over reason, the passions predominating over the intellect! he saw conscience condemning man! he saw man covered with the leprosy of moral pollution! he saw Divine vengeance pursuing him! he saw hell opening to swallow him up! he saw heaven closing over man! he saw, he fled, he came to our relief! forth he came from the bosom of the Father, to make passion yield to reason, darkness to light, falsehood to truth, all to grace; he came to calm conscience, to disarm the vengeance of heaven, to swallow up death in victory, to close the mouth of the infernal abyss, to open the kingdom of heaven to all believers. That was his mission.

When God said at first, "Let there be light," and there was light, the substance brought in that manner into such splendid existence was not arrayed with any attributes either in harmony with the purposes of the Creator, or with any in opposition to them. But, when the soul of man had to be renewed, had to be redeemed, when it had to be saved—for, remember that every soul

of man, by reason of the original apostasy, every soul of man might well say, "Help, Lord, else I perish,"—and it was to prevent that catastrophe of this perishing of the soul of man that Christ came from the bosom of the Father. And God is now directing his creating work anew to the soul. His creating work as to matter ceased at the end of the sixth day; but he has renewed his creating acts, and applies them to the soul of man; he is forming it anew, and adorning it with the beauty of holiness.

2. This kingdom is *constituted in the person of the King himself.* The crucifixion of his person is the redemption of the world. Into the mystery of the Godhead there had to be inwoven that mystery of mysteries, God manifest in the flesh. O! thou didst not despise the Virgin's womb, nor the form of a servant, nor the fashion of a man, nor the likeness of a sinner! Thou didst overcome the sharpness of death, and so didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers. Christ was first a Saviour, then a Conqueror. "He humbled himself unto death, even the death of the cross; wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and of things in earth, and things under the earth." Christ, by his sacrificial death, has appeased the justice of God, magnified the law, and secured a revenue, an eternally-accumulating revenue of honor to the government and character of God. Christ, like

others, has waded to his empire through blood; but he has waded to his empire through no blood but the blood of his own heart. He fell himself to exalt us. Worthy, indeed, is he to be the commander of the armies of the living God, and lead them on from conquering to conquer.

3. This kingdom is *a peaceable kingdom:* it is a beneficent institution. Its attributes are righteousness, peace, benevolence, integrity, purity, justice, charity. O, if I were to set before you the workings of a guilty conscience, through all its complex operations, onward to judicial blindness or despair; could I anatomize before you the corruptions and deceitfulness of the human heart, thickening and blackening onward and onward through all but interminable regions of atrocity: could I show up before you the remorse that will fasten on the sinner standing before the tribunal of God, when he has heard the final sentence of banishment from the presence of God and the glory of his power: could I represent to you the gnawings of the worm that is never to be shaken off, and the pungency of the fire that will never be quenched; then, I think, you would agree with me, that the name of Jesus—that name which "charms our guilty souls," that name which is "like ointment poured forth,"—that that name is, indeed, "above every name."

It does not merely charm guilt away, but it charms *sin* away. I am speaking to those who are the subjects of the kingdom of Christ. You know what you have felt when you were in a

state of transition, passing from darkness to light, coming over from the enemy of God and righteousness to the dominion of Immanuel; you know the bitter anguish, the repentance, the emotion, the godly sorrow; and you know what the peace is, what the joy is, and what the hope is, which are felt in the service of Christ—a peace which passeth all understanding, a joy which has in it immeasurable fullness, a hope which fixes its longing and delighted eye on the tree of life that grows in the midst of the paradise of God.

But we ought not to overlook the *subsidiary* and the *collateral* blessings which flow from the kingdom of God, even in *this* world. Wherever Christianity prevails—wherever it takes hold of mankind, it effects vast changes in their social condition; it subdues many forms of savage barbarity; it mitigates the ferocity of war, it vastly ameliorates the system of laws, (if, indeed, it finds any system of laws at all,) it medicates the waters of bitterness, it softens the waters of strife.

How beautifully Isaiah represents the effects of the reign of Christ! He borrows images both from the vegetable and the animal kingdom. Take the vegetable first, which you were reading just now in the fifty-fifth chapter of his prophecies. What a primitive preacher said of St. Paul, we say of Isaiah: it was said of Paul, by a primitive teacher of Christianity, that he was *the cloud of God;* meaning thereby, I suppose, that he was the cloud whence God rolled his thunder and darted his lightning. What was said of Paul in

the New Testament may be well said of Isaiah in the Old Testament: he is *the cloud of God*, whence God radiates his lightning and hurls his thunder. Hear one of the beautiful bursting outbreaks of this great prophet of the Highest; you were reading it a few minutes ago: "For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn,"—stand by that thorn; observe its unsightliness, look at its prickles, count their number, examine the leaf; stand by that thorn, and while you stand by, it undergoes a transformation; its unsightly leaf is changed for one of beauteous aspect; and while you are gazing on the thorn, it stands before you as a stately, majestic fir-tree: "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree; and instead of the briers,"—stand by that brier, that bramble, that noxious, that unwelcome, that unsightly arrangement: stand by that brier, and as you stand by it undergoes a complete change; instead of the brier, there comes up the beautiful, sweet-scented, elegant myrtle tree. "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."

Take the other figure borrowed from the animal kingdom, not less powerful than the other: "And righteousness"—speaking of the Messiah—"And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and

faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together: and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the suckling child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den." O, what forms of lovely beauty! See that flock of sheep grazing in quietude. Look! the lion is coming up from the forest; lightnings flash from his eyeballs, and awful thunder rolls from his lips. He dashes on to the fold, and plants his feet upon the fence. He halts. See the lion arrested; see the stream, the halitus rising up from him—the ferocity exuding, the savageness passing off, the cruelty escaping from the lion. And now that he is changed, he takes down his paw, walks into the fold, and feeds with the lamb and the flock! See the young lion and the calf fastened together by a silken thread, and a little child leading them!

Such are the beautiful representations given by the prophet of the beneficent spirit of the reign of Christ. To those who will turn round and say this is figure, we reply, that it may be figure; very likely it is figure; but the figure is so much the fact that you must take off a very little per centage on the ground of its being figure. But I am not sure, I am not quite sure that it is simply and exclusively figure. It is undoubtedly so in one

sense: it is obvious that the most savage and ferocious natures are changed under the dominion of Christ; and that "righteousness," quoting the words which we have already referred to—that "righteousness, peace, and joy," are its characteristic features.

4. This kingdom, my friends, *admits of unlimited extension*, of indefinite diffusion. In fact, the successes of David and Solomon in the prosperous eras of the Jewish history, the very lodgment and boundaries of the holy land, were typical of the extension of the kingdom of Christ under its full dispensation. This kingdom shall spread and grow; it shall go out in *this* direction, and go forth in *that;* it shall traverse that region, and pass over the other; it shall go from sea to sea, and from the rivers to the ends of the earth: men shall be blessed in Christ—all nations shall call him blessed. I did not quite finish the quotation from Isaiah—I must refer you to the whole chapter at your leisure—but the prophet goes on to say, "The earth shall be full." Full! What is the meaning of *full?* "The earth shall be *full.*" What! *full?* Yes, *full!* that is the word,—"The earth shall be *full* of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." The gloom of the American woods and waters breaks up; and now there comes flowing back across the Atlantic the halleluias which they breathe forth from this our island of the sea; and those uncounted hordes, in those wilds, and snows, and fastnesses, begin to feel the direct ray of the Sun of Righteous-

ness. And Africa's numerous degraded tribes and throngs, touched by the cross, live and are free. And Persia emerges from her long sad night into the illumination of the Sun of Righteousness. And India, with her teeming population, crowds around the feet of our Immanuel, pouring out there her gifts—gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. And China, with her unnumbered immortal beings, feels the cross the central place of bliss; and that great, proud, adamantine wall, which has maintained a solid front so long that it has acquired the name of *impregnable*—that great wall, surrounded by the rams' horns, tumbles down, as did the walls of Jericho when they were surrounded by the rams' horns blown by the priests: down comes the wall of China, in goes the ark of the Lord, and it rolls over that immense territory of paganism, turning it into the garden of the Lord. Like a triumphant general, pushing first his conquest in this direction, and then in that; first, one class of the people comes in, and then another throws down their arms, and then another sweep of the territory catches the contagion of submission; and thus it goes on, for I don't know which way the coming of the kingdom of Christ that is to be; it is like lightning—no man can regulate the current, or determine the motion; like lightning, glancing from east to west, the coming of the kingdom of Christ shall be.

"The dark American He shall convert,
And shine in every pagan's heart."

But that does not exhaust the triumphs of our Immanuel. No; there is included another description of people altogether, and, I must say, a still more interesting description of people. Turn your eyes over the planet, on each region, soil, and clime; and wherever you direct your vision, there meet you the decayed, sapless, withered, shrunken, shriveled branches of the stock of Israel. There they lie scattered, dissociated, all in desolation. Who can look at the state of the Jews and not feel for them? The history of the Jews is one of the most amazing demonstrations of the truth of the Bible. Their history, connected with the Scriptures, furnishes the most unlettered and the most ungifted among us with weapons of irresistible temper, wherewith we may overmaster the stoutest enemy of revelation. When the kingdom of God is fully grown to its proper dimensions, it shall inclose within it the seed of Abraham: or, to change its figure, the condition of the Jews is like that of metal in a furnace; there is still much dross with them; they are lying in the furnace, but they are destined to come out of the furnace like gold, yea, like fine gold, to adorn the temple of our God. Christ shall have the whole earth; and Jew and Gentile, bond and free, black and white, east and west, north and south—the *whole earth* shall be full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord.

5. This kingdom of Christ will be *of long duration:* not like earthly kingdoms, which rise up, run forward, gain the zenith, and then decline,

and their names pass away, and their memory is blotted out; not like these shall be the kingdom of Christ. This kingdom "lasts; like the sun it shall stand." I am not going to enter upon the dispute about the *thousand years*, as the duration, the term of the duration, of the prosperous reign of our Messiah on earth. I am aware of the difference of opinion as to the meaning of the thousand years. I am not going to take on myself to deliver any opinion as to whether the thousand years are to be understood *literally*—naturally, that is—that is, as so many solar years; or whether they are to be understood *prophetically*, after the mode of reckoning specified by Daniel in the Old Testament, when he marks the duration of Antichrist. There is this peculiarity to be observed, that the only writer in the New Testament who mentions the thousand years is *John*. John, in the New Testament, answers to Daniel in the Old Testament. Daniel in his prediction mentions the length of the duration of Antichrist: he gives us the years; he tells us each day is to be taken for a year. There may not, therefore, be any thing exactly heretical in supposing that John, who is the Daniel of the New Testament, when he mentions one thousand years as the duration of the day of Christ, means years prophetically considered. I confess that, to my own mind, much difficulty attends either the one or the other mode of interpretation. If you take the *literal* mode of interpretation, then the number of years assigned for the duration of the prosperous reign of Christ is too

small to agree with what many Scriptures speak concerning the lengthened reign of Immanuel in his high estate on earth. The reign of Christ is contrasted, you will observe, with the duration of the great monarchies; it is expressly affirmed, that Christ's reign shall be longer than that of the great monarchies. Now, we know, that putting the great monarchies together, their duration was, at least, three thousand years; therefore, if we take the literal interpretation of the thousand years, that does not seem to harmonize with what such passages affirm. If we take the *other* interpretation, taking each day of the thousand years for a year, and then arrive at three hundred and sixty thousand years, that is most staggering to our faculties, overpowering to our intellect, confounding to our perceptions. We forget, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. For my own part, I decline being fettered either by the one interpretation or the other: I take, rather, the general summary representation of the entire volume—namely, that the reign of Christ on the earth will be of vast extent; and, in one sense, that the reign of Christ will have no end.

There is a beautiful passage in the fifteenth chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians—a passage "dark with excess of light," which touches this point: I mean the passage which says, "Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority

and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. . . . But when he saith, All things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

Now, some from this magnificent passage infer, that when the work of Christ in relation to our world is finally accomplished, he will return to the state in which he was previous to his entering upon the accomplishment of the great work. We suppose the passage warrants no such conclusion. Undoubtedly, when Christ shall have finished his mediatorial dominion, when he shall have reclaimed the earth, and when the unyielding part shall be shut up; the part that will neither be swayed by mercy, solicited by love, thrilled by tenderness, nor subdued by any thing—when they are closed up, and shut up, and the whole reclaimed part is brought back to God even the Father, then Christ shall give up the kingdom; and, like the son of a king who has been sent out from his father's court, with a large commission, to quell a rebellion which had broken out in some distant quarter, and when he has accomplished the work, comes back to his father's court, gives up his robes of royalty, but reigns with his father: so Jesus Christ shall deliver up, bring back, the kingdom in its finished, completed state, to God even the Father, and God shall be all in all. Only the eternal Son will reign

with the eternal Father: the human nature of the eternal Son, as the instrument by which the dominion was set up, by which the conquest was won, by which the triumphs were gained, the human nature of Christ will shine out with a distinct and separate glory for ever and ever.

6. This leads me to observe, lastly, that *the brightness of this kingdom is perpetually increasing.* O, I rejoice to think—I think it, I believe it—that there is not an hour in any day in which some straggling rebel is not coming unto Christ, kissing his scepter, and devoting himself to his service. The number of Christ's subjects is continually increasing. There is already a multitude before the throne that can never be withdrawn; and the successes that are going on upon earth are swelling that continually-accumulating amount of the first-born that is in heaven. Now the Gospel represents each dispensation of God as brighter than the one before it, and the latter part of any dispensation as brighter than the former part of it: the light of the moon is to become as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun as the light of seven suns.

I am not going to dispute now, whether or no, in the glorious season of the reign of Christ, he will descend on earth in person, as some have imagined that he will. But, I may be allowed to say, that that point is begirt with a thousand difficulties, surrounded with a rampart, a barrier of immense obstacles, which do not at the moment seem to strike some of those who so readily imbibe the sentiment. For our part, if we were to sup-

pose that Christ was to come down and reign on earth in person during the prosperous period of his administration among our fellow-men, I should come to the conclusion that a large part of the New Testament must be superseded. The New Testament is constructed, from beginning to end, on the supposition that Christ's bodily presence is in heaven, and not on earth. A large part of the institutions of the Christian religion must be superseded on the supposition that Christ comes to reign on earth in person; and if he were to come and reign in person, only imagine whether there would not be a repetition of the same unseemly scenes which attended him at his first advent. There was a strife among his disciples which should be the nearest to his person, which should be chief in his kingdom. Only imagine that there was some locality on earth where Christ was in his personal glory: would not all that were at a distance from that locality feel extremely uneasy? Would not the whole earth be setting in to the one point? Is it imaginable that any Christian could know that his blessed Lord and Master was on earth, and rest and be quiet without going, attempting to go, and behold his personal glory? I, therefore, merely say that the notion is beset with a vast multitude of difficulties, and to support what we have said about the growing brightness of the kingdom of Christ, it is not necessary to suppose any such thing. I think, when by the diffusion of the Word of God, and by the efflux, the influx, the down-coming of the Divine Spirit of God—when, by the

translation and circulation of the Word of God, so that every inhabitant of our race shall have a copy —when, by the communication of the Spirit of God, which Spirit shall come down on ten thousand ministers, and enlarge the hearts of a hundred thousand Christians in a moment—when the Word of God is every-where, and the Spirit of God is every-where—when falsehood is nowhere, and truth every-where—when darkness is nowhere, and light every-where—when vice is nowhere, and virtue every-where—that is glory enough for us; we leave the rest to heaven.

Such, then, is the kingdom about which we are taught to pray in the text.

II. On the second part of the subject I shall, of course, endeavor to be very brief. It is to point out SOME GROUNDS ON WHICH THE PIOUS MAY LOOK AND PRAY FOR THE DIFFUSION OF THIS KINGDOM—some of the grounds on which they may expect its UNIVERSAL DIFFUSION.

1. We are warranted in such an expectation, I may say, almost from *analogy*. Why does the moon spread her horns? Why, it is to fill them. Why does the sun rise above the horizon? It is that he may go on his march upward and onward, till he gains his meridian altitude, and pours his vertical glory on the world below. Why is the corn deposited in the soil? It is that it may unwrap, that it may unfold itself—that of that single seed there may come a tree, the branches of which are for a lodgment of the birds, and a shadow for the beasts of the earth. Why does the rill steal

silently from under the sod, wend its way among the grass and the pebbles, following its course onward and onward, enlarging its channel, rendering the fissure wider and wider for itself—till at last that little rill becomes a mighty river, bearing on its bosom the riches of a nation, and feeding with its irrigations a nation's agriculture? When shall the kingdom of Christ have no boundaries? Shall it always be in a state of minority? Shall Satan usurp all? Why, it is impossible that it should remain so? Christ *must* reign. Take it in the vigorous language of the apostle, in that passage in his first Epistle to the Corinthians which I have just now read in your hearing: "He *must* reign till he hath put all his enemies under his feet." Why, if you consider Christianity as it was eighteen hundred years ago, and compare its state *then* with its state *now;* you must arrive at the conclusion that there is not so great a difference between the state it has actually attained *now*, and the state to which we are looking forward when it shall be universal —there is not so great a difference between its condition at *first*, and the condition at which it has actually arrived *now;* and as Christianity has already prevailed so far, as it has overcome so much idolatry, melted away so many abominations, broken the spell of so many diabolical charms, as it has done—unless it be smitten with a paralysis, unless it cease to have the care of Jehovah—it must, in the nature of things, go on till it has subdued the whole earth, and men every-where acknowledge the supremacy of Jesus Christ.

2. We are led to the same conclusion from *the symbolical events of Jewish history.* I can here merely touch on some of those events.

Look for a moment, then, at Egypt, and see the contest that went on between Moses and Aaron and the magicians of Egypt. It was a contest between the true religion and a false religion, and every miracle that was wrought by Moses struck at the root of some popular idolatry. Did the Egyptians worship the sun? They did. Moses stretched forth his hand, and there was darkness at high noon all over the land. Did the Egyptians worship the air? Did they worship fire? Did they worship the elements, the principles of nature? They did. Moses lifted up his hand, and the earth swarmed with lice. Did they worship the river Nile? They did. Moses lifted up his hand, and the Nile was choked with frogs. And so, if the time did allow, I could show that every evolution of the arm of Moses struck at some idolatry prevailing among the Egyptians. And you know the contest waxed hotter and hotter; for awhile the magicians seemed to prevail, but at last the magicians cried out, "We are conquered; we are mastered; we are beaten; this is the finger of God:" and revelation won the day. And as surely as in that celebrated contest between the magicians and Moses, Moses was triumphant; so in the contest between light and darkness, between truth and falsehood, between revelation and idolatry—light, truth, and revelation shall win the day.

I might refer you to several other such sublime events: as, for instance, the contest carried on at the top of Mount Carmel, between Elijah and some hundreds of the representatives of Moabitish idolatry. How very unequal the contest at first appeared! Your own recollections will supply you with the whole of that contest, and the grand triumph in which it issued: Elijah was victorious, true religion won the day, and idolatry was vanquished on the top of the hill.

So with respect to Dagon and the ark of the Lord. The idol being brought into juxtaposition with the ark of God, the ark retained its place; but the idol fell down prostrate, and was broken in pieces. And so, surely, every other idol shall be prostrated before our Immanuel.

Passing from individual cases, take the general case; indeed, I have partly referred to this already — I mean the contest about the land of Canaan. When the children of Israel took possession of that land, according to the promise of God to their fathers, there was some part of the land which did not submit to them; there was a hill fortified by the Jebusites, which stood out long after the other parts had come in—a long time after the lower land (so to speak) had acknowledged the sway of the Israelites. But in the time of David the Jebusites were conquered, that strong tower was taken; and to show the complete triumph of religion, Solomon built the temple on the crest of that mountain. And as surely as that last hill, that remaining fortress, was subdued, so surely

the last stronghold of idolatry shall yield to the scepter of Christ, and the whole earth shall be filled with his glory.

3. I might pass from this, and say, We are taught the same by *all the figures and representations of the New Testament.* This kingdom is spoken of as leaven; the kingdom of God is likened to leaven which was hid in three measures of meal, and the whole became leavened.

It is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which at the first is the smallest of all seeds, but which grows until it becomes the largest of trees. I might add other illustrations in the New Testament equally applicable, in the light they throw on this subject, with those referred to in the Old. But I pass this, and merely say that the whole line of Scripture, from beginning to end, warrants the expectation now indulged by the Christian Church. There are many prophecies scattered over the firmament of revelation announcing the great truth; it is not one here and one there, but the stars of promise are so numerous in the firmament that they form a sort of galaxy, a kind of milky way, a stream of light passing through the whole. We shield ourselves against all the doubts of the lukewarm, and all the objections of the infidel, and say, "*Thus saith the Lord.*"

4. I might say that *moral proportion requires* that the kingdom of God should become thus glorious. The providence of God effects great results by small means; but in this dispensation here are vast means employed. His eternal Son becomes

clothed with our flesh; he dies on Calvary. There is in this an immense employment of means, and moral proportion requires that the result shall be vastly majestic and expansive. Christ must see of the travail of his soul; and O, how millennially must his kingdom come, before his philanthropic heart shall say, "Enough! enough! that is all I look for; stop! stop! I shed my blood for no more." We know that "Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man;" and, having poured out his soul as an offering for the whole race, vast, indeed, must be his triumphs before he can say, "Enough! that is all; that completes the whole."

5. Finally, my brethren, when we think of *the energy that is employed* in the diffusion of this kingdom, our hopes arise, and our expectations rise. There are vast difficulties, we are told, which attend our enterprise. We are not ignorant of them. We are much obliged to infidels for calling our attention to them, but we have not overlooked them. They tell us there are *physical* difficulties, arising from the construction of the earth—there being four or five great continents, between these continents rolling vast oceans, these oceans being studded with thousands of islands, peopled with various descriptions of inhabitants, these inhabitants speaking different languages, and having different laws. We are aware of these difficulties. And then the infidel objector tells of *political* difficulties, (we are aware of them too,) arising from the different forms of government which prevail in

the most thickly peopled portions of the globe, the many restrictions of commerce, and so on—the jealousy of the European influence, and the extreme reluctance to admit any thing coming from our quarter, thinking that no good can come to them from our land. We are aware of these political difficulties; and when infidels have swelled and enlarged the amount as much as they can, we have another class of difficulties, which are to our mind more serious than the physical difficulties or the political difficulties. I allude to the class of difficulties which are called moral difficulties, coming from the darkness of the understanding, the stupidity of the conscience, the depravity of the will, the corruption of the affections, arising from the sway which the devil has in the human heart. I put my moral difficulties alongside their physical difficulties and their political difficulties; and I lay all these difficulties tier on tier, alps on alps! Mountain on mountain they rise; but what are they all before the all-conquering Spirit of our God? The mountain shall become a valley; the hill shall be made low. He shall touch the mountains, and they shall melt away; he shall speak the word, and great shall be the company of them that publish it. The power of God put forth in the administration of his Spirit shall overcome all the difficulties that rise.

I may just venture to say that my own opinion is just this: that if the Christian Church in England, Ireland, Scotland, America, and the Continent of Europe—if the whole Christian Church—

were at this moment prepared with the apparatus, had ready the machinery, had ready the appointed means, it would be found that the full time—the great ocean tide—of spiritual influence had come; the immense harvest would be shortly reaped; God be glorified throughout the whole earth.

III. Point out some of the encouraging intimations which we have of the coming of this Kingdom of Christ—some of the special inducements which we have now to employ the prayer of our text, and to employ it with more than ordinary zeal and frequency.

In the animal and the vegetable kingdoms, you know, there are some periods of the year in which the growth is more rapid, and visible, and palpable than at other periods. It is so in the kingdom of Christ; there are seasons in which it has rapidly extended itself. Such was the period of its introduction. Then the kingdom of heaven, as it is called to intimate its celestial and Divine origin—then the kingdom of heaven was indeed like a grain of mustard seed: the seed was cast into the earth, and soon became a great tree; and the whole of the then known world shortly reposed, in profession at least, under the shadow of it. And even in the dark ages that followed, when Satan appeared to have recovered by craft what he had lost in open conflict—even then there was a considerable number who were faithful to the death, and zealous in their Master's service. In the time of the Reformation the kingdom came, you know, with all-conquering force. The waters of life were

confined within embankments; the billows began to heave and swell; and at last they broke down the barriers, and Europe was filled with knowledge and piety.

We think we are arriving at another, a third, distinctive era in the history of the kingdom of Christ, in which it is coming. Could I detain you to put my finger on the marks or the signs of this I would do so.

1. Look at *the facilities which there are for it;* there never were such facilities since the apostles' time. We have colonies, great flourishing colonies, all over the globe, which are so many focal points whence the light is to radiate in every direction beyond them. We have swift-winged messengers to carry our missionaries and our Bibles to more distant lands; and of all the ships that have left our shore, none surely have left it with more interest than that did which parted from the shore a few days ago, manned with missionaries, freighted with Bibles: a ship-load of instrumentality to put back the frontier of idolatry. We have missionaries; they are rising here and there, on this hand and that, and they are crying and saying, "Here are we; send us far hence to the Gentiles." Now the war standard is taken down; now the blood-stained sword of battle is sheathed; and we have opportunities to unsheathe the bloodless sword of the Spirit. Now the highways are making all over the earth; and there were never such facilities for the diffusion of the Gospel as at this moment. We are preparing the Roman roads; we are throw-

ing up the Apennine way; and the millennial car of our Immanuel shall roll over east, west, north, and south, and take possession of the uttermost parts of the earth.

2. Besides the facilities for effort, there is, I think, rather more *union of effort* than there has been for ages. I am by no means a flatterer of myself or others on this subject. I do not think there is so much union of effort as there *might* be, nor so much as there *ought* to be, nor so much as there *will* be. But there *is* union of effort: all Christian Churches are shaking themselves from their inglorious slumber to behold the vast extent of infidelity, which, like a mighty weight, like a horrid incubus, is bestriding the human family: and the Gospel, like a great lever, is applied to that horrid mass; and I see every denomination of Christians stretching forth their hands to the lever, and setting the world free. And if Christian denominations on this subject strike a different chord, it is but as it were to produce harmony. There is no Christian Church that I know which has not its missionary agency, or station, or something or other of that description, except (may I mention it? If I do, I am sure it is with the greatest respect for the respectable body whose name I don't know that I ought to avoid)—every Christian Church, I say, has now its missionary system, except that called the Friends; though I see them moving in this way and that way, contriving somehow or other to assist missionary projects: and though there is a ligature around themselves for

the moment, a ligature about themselves from their own system, which hinders them from supporting such things openly out and out; yet they are dropping in silently, here and there, their beautiful, mild, benevolent contributions. And I am sure it must come to this, that if there is a branch of the Christian Church which has not its missionary prayer-meeting, its missionary society, its missionary collection, or its missionary something or other, I am afraid that, if it is a part of the Christian at all, it is in danger of being dislocated, hanging on like a broken joint. Let it at once, then, become inoculated, freely and fully, with the missionary fire and feeling, and take its place with the grand army of the living God, which is going on to take possession of the earth in the name of the Lord.

3. Then, again, I might say that *the success of effort* is also a most encouraging circumstance. We may be asked, "What can you do? What can a handful of missionaries do? Is it impossible that you, with your instrumentality, can accomplish the wonders that you are projecting and dreaming about? As to the Hindoos, we were told that they were too high, too polished, too learned, too refined, too sublimated, too far up for us with our Gospel. Well, then, as to the Hottentots, we thought surely we might go to *them*. No, no; they were too *low*, too far down, too sunken, too devoid of intellect. Then we considered we might take some part or other in the long line of these two extreme points; but wherever we began

our operations we found some objection. However, we tried the Hindu; and the yoke is hanging on him now very loosely indeed; and come a few more prayerful efforts, and his yellow robe and his lying vanities are laid aside forever, and he is clothed with the robe of righteousness and the garment of salvation. And as to the Hottentot, as to the negro, O, what sweet societies we see of converted negroes! what beautiful churches! what large assemblies of communicants! I allow that, considering the vast amount yet to be done, what has been done is like the few berries which the prophet saw at the top of a mulberry tree under the vision of Damascus. But those few berries are the germ of an immense forest that shall stretch all over the world, the certain pledge of universal extension.

But I feel that I am exhausting you as well as myself, though I am not exhausting the subject; there is a great deal more to be said—I hope a great deal more to be *felt* by you. But, instead of trespassing now, allow me to draw toward a close by one or two brief inferential remarks in the way of application of the whole subject.

In the first place—for I cannot suppose that all in this immense assembly are yet the real voluntary subjects and followers of the Lord Jesus Christ—to that part of the congregation, therefore, I address myself a minute. You, my fellow-sinners, are not far from the kingdom of Christ: yes, you are not far from it; you have *heard* the Gospel, and you have *felt* it; you *know* you have; you KNOW

you have: you know you have had many emotions stirred within your breasts, many convictions excited within you; you have some longings, some heavings of soul after the light and liberty of the Gospel; but then you have smothered its convictions; you have gone away to the hurry of business, or the delirium of pleasure, and you have disregarded the voice of conscience, and the voice of the Gospel: and now you are as dark as ever you were, and as hard as ever you were, and as cold as ever you were; nay, I am afraid that some of you are darker than you were, that some of you are harder than you were, that some of you are colder than you were: for if metal thrown into the furnace to be subdued does not yield to the action of the fire, if it is not reduced, its texture becomes firmer, its parts come close together, and it is harder and denser than it was before.

I fear I am addressing some this evening who do not feel so much now under a sermon as they felt seven years ago. I am no stranger to many of you; you have heard my voice before. I preach to you—you who are unconverted who used to hear me in this place—I preach to you under a great disadvantage; I have to try to succeed where I failed before; I have to try to get in where I was shut out before; you have refused me, and others more powerful than myself by far, in their modes of preaching—you have refused me and them again and again: but I am not going to give you up; I preach the Gospel to you; I preach it to you, one and all; I preach it to you this mo-

ment; and I tell you the fact, that cold, blind, dead, dull, stupid, as you may be, through sin and misery, you may come to life, you may come to light and liberty. Jesus is the resurrection and the life; he can raise the dead souls. O, that this night the kingdom of God may come to you! I tell you it may be once for all, it may be for the last time—I tell you the ark of salvation, like Noah's ark, is floating this moment past your door; it stops now at your threshold; and the voice of mercy invites you to come in. Get into the ark; get into the ark: the deluge is coming on; get into the ark. "He that believeth shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned."

You who are the subjects of the kingdom of Christ, bear with me while I address one word to you. You *have* grace; seek for *more* grace; the reality and the experience of grace are one thing, the abundance of its communication is another. O that grace may rest on you all! I am sure if the professors of religion were more pious, if they were more spiritual, if they were more devoted, if they were more given to prayer, if they were what they ought to be, and what they might be, their piety would act with an augmented power, and vastly accelerate the coming of the kingdom of Christ. O! that in this matter of individual personal experience, as well as in general feeling, the light of the moon may be as the sun, and the light of the sun may be as seven days!

## VII.

### "THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD BY FAITH."

"Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference."—ROMANS iii, 22.

WHAT a book the Bible is! How great its value, and of what various kinds is its value made up. To these very Scriptures we are indebted for the only rational account of the formation of man, of the origin of evil, and of the peopling of the world. The Bible makes us acquainted with events far more remote than the most authentic of profane historians give us any account of. The Bible, moreover, unfolds to us the only satisfactory account of the being of a God: of his nature, of his essence, of his attributes, of his will, of his government, and of his providence. To the Scriptures we are indebted for a system of morals far simpler than that of Aristotle, far purer than that of Plato, far more spiritual than that of Seneca—pure as the graces around the throne of God in heaven;—a theory of morals compared with which all the theories of morals elaborated in the groves and academies of the ancient world are but as the lispings of infancy, or the driveling of idiocy. On all these accounts the Bible is the book for man; the very book for him; "a light to his feet and a lamp unto his path." But on none of these accounts, taken singly, nor on all of them, taken to-

gether, does the chief value of the Bible depend. The glory of the book, the charm of the volume, the special glory of these Scriptures is, that they contain a revelation of the mercy of God to guilty man, that they answer that all-important and transcendent question, "What must I do to be saved?" they giving a clear, full, unequivocal, intelligible, perfect answer to that great question, and thus stamping the book with a unique, extraordinary, and transcendent value. It is comparatively of no use for a man to be learned in the history of the Scriptures, in the scholarship of the Scriptures, in the criticism of the Scriptures, in the morals of the Scriptures, if he remains unacquainted with, and unimpressed by, that divine method of righteousness, that plan of justification, which it is the specific object of the Bible to unfold, unwrap, unlock, set home, and apply. To none other of the writings of the Bible are we more indebted than to those of the Apostle Paul; all the writings of this man call for attention, and will well repay the profoundest and most intense application. On his faculties lay the dew of Hermon, on his lip lay the fire of heaven: he was a wise master builder, and well he laid the foundation; and "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

There was a home-striking nervousness about Paul, a melting of tenderness, a soaring to a sublimity of what art never knew. None of the writings of Paul are more valuable than the Epistle to the Romans, just because in this epistle we have

the clearest statement and the fullest vindication of God's method of righteousness—

> "O how unlike the complex work of man,
> Is God's almighty simple saving plan."

And that "simple saving plan" is presented in this epistle, is argued in this epistle, is affirmed in this epistle, is exhibited in this epistle, with a prodigiousness of power and clearness, so that he who runs may read.

My brethren, my fellow-countrymen, the need of a method of righteousness has its origin in the simple but startling fact, that man has sinned. God gave to man a law, a law eminently fitted for man; a law the very transcript of the lawgiver's will. My brethren, my fellow-countrymen, man was under the strongest obligation to have kept that law; but man has broken it—*you*—*I*—WE—ALL, have broken the law—"there is none righteous, no, not one." If any man turns round offended with this charge, and says that unrighteousness in him is just a casualty, an accident, not intended—that he was overpowered by circumstances which he could not control, overmastered by temptation which he could not resist, that his *will* never was in the transgression, that his understanding never approved of it, that his mind always protested against it, that he is therefore more to be pitied than blamed—then the apostle comes forward with another declaration, "There is none that understandeth." Men are proud of their understanding; they regard it as a pure and perfect

chrysolite; even when they go the length of allowing that there is something the matter with their actions, they still stand up for the integrity of their understandings. They say, they never meant any thing bad; they never intended any thing wrong. Now, if the hands of the clock were always pointing wrong, I don't suppose that any one here would be able to believe that the action of the machinery within was perfectly right—and if a man's actions are bad, his heart is not good! But since men are so proud of their understanding, and it is so difficult to bring them to believe that there is any thing really seriously the matter, observe how the apostle brings forward a proof of what he says about the understanding: "There is none that seeketh after God!" Why God is the "perfection of beauty"—the father mind of the universe; the central point of bliss; the fountain of all beatitude; and if men understood that aright, they would seek after God; as sure as the young flower seeks the sun and opening its petals in the morning, and turning them toward the sun, asks the sun to kiss them into loveliness and grace; as sure as the needle in the compass seeks for the pole, and trembles till it points to it; as sure as the water obeys the influences of the moon, and the attractions of the earth, in its ebbing and flowing, so certainly would the understanding seek after God if it were not utterly corrupt and debased. Then, observe, how the apostle takes up the whole subject of our depravity and presents it before us, with an eye that never winks, with a

nerve that never trembles; and, with a hand that never misses, he cuts down upon our corruption, through all the coverings that lie about it, all the bandages that shroud it, all the envelopes that conceal it—and cuts down till he comes to the core, and proves that man is tainted at the core, corrupt all over, all round, all through. So to speak, he says, and shows, that all the organs and all the tissues of a man's moral nature are involved in the general condemnation: the lips, the eyes, the tongue, the throat, the head, the feet—"the throat is an open sepulcher;" "with the tongue they have used deceit;" "the poison of asps is under the lip;" "the mouth is full of cursing and bitterness;" "the feet are swift to shed blood;" "destruction and misery are in their path, and the way of peace they have not known;" "there is no fear of God before their eyes."

And then, after this wonderfully minute, vivid, graphic, all-comprehensive description of our depravity, he draws this sweeping inference, "Now we know that whatsoever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law." That takes us in; that includes ourselves—"that every mouth may be stopped." What, do you plead your innocence? Do you offer some palliation? "That every mouth may be stopped!" Do you offer some excuse? You may be good in your own eyes; you may be good in the eyes of some of your fellow-men around you; but what the apostle affirms, with all the weight of apostolic authority, is, that "the whole world is guilty before God."

Now, then, observe how the apostle comes forward afterward and announces the way of righteousness just like the eagle darting from its eyrie in the cliff, and flying right in the face of the sun, there to dip his wing, stretch his pinion, fire his eye; and away goes the apostle to communicate a new method of righteousness, a divine plan of justification. "But now," says he, "the righteousness of God without the law is manifest, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all them that believe; for there is no difference." May God bless his word! "O earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord!" "Faith comes by hearing."

Our topic, then, is justification, the righteousness of God, "Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference." We shall notice—

I. THE NATURE OF THE RIGHTEOUSNESS BROUGHT TO US BY THE GOSPEL.

II. THE METHOD OF ITS APPLICATION.

III. ITS UNIVERSAL APPLICATION.

Consider what I say; and if the Holy Ghost shall be pleased to carry home to your consciences what I should say to you, it will be like a fire, and it will burn up all the briers and thorns that are setting in array against the truth. May the Holy Ghost descend on the preacher and on the hearer!

I. We have to consider THE NATURE OF THE RIGHTEOUSNESS BROUGHT TO US BY THE GOSPEL—

the righteousness itself, here called "the righteousness of God." This is a phrase, as used in the writings of the Apostle Paul, which has two significations—the justice of God, and conformity to law. It cannot here mean the justice of God, because it is not true, either historically or theologically, to say of the justice of God that it is upon a man. When Paul says, therefore, that the righteousness of God is "upon" a man, it is not the justice of God that is intended. It must mean, then, conformity to law, provided for and brought about by a special arrangement of the providence of God—and therefore it is called "the righteousness of God." In his epistles you find that the apostle makes mention of two sorts of conformity to law: the one fancied, the other real; the one pharisaical, the other evangelical; the one ours, the other God's. In the ninth chapter of this epistle he says, "What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law." In the beginning of the next chapter we have a passage constructed in the same manner. He says, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness"—

there is one righteousness—"and going about to establish their own righteousness"—there is another righteousness—"have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law"—that is, the *scope* of the law—"for righteousness to every one that believeth." And there is just one passage more which I will recite to you. Paul says, "I count all things but loss, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." I know not how these passages may strike you, but they strike me on this wise—the object of the apostle in constructing these sentences, clearly, is to drive us out of one righteousness, and shut us up to another. Then what is the righteousness of God? What is the matter of it? Is it faith? I am asked by some one, Is it faith? forasmuch as in some of these passages it is called righteousness of faith? I answer, No; in no wise; on no account. Faith is an act of man's own mind, whereas the righteousness of God is on a man—faith is the traveling forth of a sinner's emptiness to meet the Saviour's fullness; the Saviour's fullness is one thing, and the sinner's emptiness going forth to meet him is another thing. Faith and the righteousness of God are not identical, for the text says, "it is on him." I am asked by some if these good works which flow from the exercise of faith, in the Divine influence on the believing man, are the righteousness of God! I answer no! and I give

this answer to this question for the same reason that I give it to the other question—these good works are ours, just as the fruits gathered from the soil are called the fruits of the earth; they are the product of the influence of the sun, and rain, and dew, and a million atmospheric influences acting on the tree and soil, and the fruits produced upon the tree are called the fruits of the earth; so those good works which are produced in the exercise of faith, as the result of a Divine influence on the believing man, are the man's, and he will be judged according to them at the last day; but righteousness is not man's, it is God's. Besides, I am not aware that these good works are absolutely perfect, and to be accepted by God they must be really and absolutely perfect. But if for argument sake I were to allow that they are so, I am met by the question, What is to be done with that black cloud of the sinner's past transgressions—that thunder cloud which is hanging over him, charged with electricity, fringed with lightning, and ready, at any moment, to burst on the sinner's head? Enough, enough; I feel it is enough; the righteousness is not ours, it is the righteousness of God. When God sent forth his Son into the world, made of a woman, made under the law, it was that he might take every precept of the law of God, and fulfill it, illustrate it, exemplify it, and he could say, and he did say, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" "Sin is the transgression of the law."

But observe the same necessity that led him to

remain under the precept of the law, also compelled him to be under the penalty of the law; for the law under which he was made was not a law simply; it was a broken law, a dishonored law, and a law claiming and demanding satisfaction. When the Son of God was made of a woman, and made under the law, there was heard the most awful voice that ever was heard in the universe yet. "Awake, O sword, against the man that is my fellow, and smite the shepherd"—smite him! When there was a man in the world that was Jehovah's fellow there was some one who could magnify the law, in smiting whom justice could obtain its demands. The sword of justice smote him, struck him, cut him! The sword of justice had a commission to smite the man that was Jehovah's fellow; it smote him in Bethlehem; it smote him all along the highway of his life, even to Calvary. On Calvary the strokes of the sword fell heavy; the glances of that sword then darkened the sun; the strokes of the sword shook earth, shook hell; it kept smiting and smiting the man that was God's fellow, till at last he cried, "It is finished!" Then the sword fell at the foot of the cross, hushed, lulled, pacified; and it lay there till the third hallowed morning, when it was found changed into a scepter of mercy; and that scepter of mercy has been waving among mankind ever since, and it is waving now; it is waving in this assembly; it is so waving here that any one may stretch the hand and touch the scepter, and whoever touches it shall live, and may live forever.

The apostle says, "EVEN the righteousness of God;" as much as if he had said, and what a righteousness! "EVEN the righteousness of God!" What a complete righteousness! What a perfect righteousness! It must be complete, it must be perfect! It is the doing of the Lord our God! What a glorious righteousness it is! Sinner, get it on! get it on! the being clothed with it shall hide your abominations and loathsomeness, and you shall become lovely in the eye of God himself. He will see no spot in you! no spot of guilt remaining—

> "While Jesus' blood through earth and sky,
> Mercy, free, boundless mercy cry."

With this righteousness on, there is not an angel from heaven moving on in the universe on some errands of benevolence and kindness that would not if he met you stop and say, "All hail! thou art highly favored of the Lord!" "Even the righteousness of God." What a righteousness! It is an everlasting righteousness. I like something that will last. Something that will not wear out. When God made the soul he made it to last. He wrote upon it—"I made this to last." The sun will not last! The moon will not last! The solar system will not last! ALL the stars will flee away; but this shall last; the soul will last, and when Christ made his righteousness, he made it to last. My fellow-sinners, get it on; wear it! fold it well about you when you go down into the swellings of Jordan: and then, all that I have to

say is, you will be righteous to all eternity. "Even the righteousness of God."

And now let me ring the chimes in your ears; let me fetch up some crystals out of the cabinet which contains this glorious truth. "This is the name whereby he shall be called—The Lord our Righteousness." "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be forever, and my righteousness shall never be abolished. Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength, and in the Lord shall all Israel be justified." "Christ is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Have you got this righteousness? Have your eyes seen this salvation? Or are you driveling life away in attempts to make a righteousness of your own? This you may attempt, but you can never succeed. As well might you attempt to walk the starry firmament with your clayey feet; as well might you attempt to raise the ruined archangel from the bottomless pit, and wipe the brand off his brow with a single move of your hand, as attempt to make a righteousness of your own. It is the righteousness of God.

II. The method of its application.

"Even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of our Lord Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe." As far as the offer of a

righteousness is concerned, it is universal—"unto *all*." Be you who you may or what you may, come from whence you may, let your name or condition be what they may—the offer of this righteousness comes to you. It comes to one as much as to another. Be you the fairest Pharisee that ever walked in the light of his own eyes, or the foulest profligate reeking out of hell—be you a fifty pence debtor or a five hundred pence debtor —Barbarian, Scythian, bond or free—this righteousness comes as much to you as to any one else. It is "unto *all*." Hear the tidings contained in the charter given to regulate the distribution and circulation of the Gospel—"Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to *every creature*." Till that charter is torn up by him who gave it—till these words are cut out of the book by him that put them into it—I shall offer this righteousness to every one of you. It is "unto *all*." No man on earth, no devil from hell, no angel from heaven, shall hinder me from telling *you*, O sinner, that there is righteousness for *you!* Look this way! The white flag waves, and the silver trumpet sounds, and the note of invitation is given—"Ho, every one (*every one*) that thirsteth, come ye to the waters."

But, while the offer is thus unrestricted, the application of the righteousness is to them that believe. Now, do not look to me for a philosophical definition of the meaning, or a metaphysical account of what is included in believing. "Believing" is a simple term, a simple term is a term ex-

pressing a simple idea, and a simple idea is an idea which is as plain at first as it is at last. It is an idea which is so plain at first, that if you try to make it plainer by heaping up a quantity of words and a quantity of philosophy, you "darken counsel" and mystify the subject. It is an idea seen at first as clearly as at last; therefore, if I do not attempt any metaphysical or philosophical definition of believing, it is because such attempts on the part of learned men have often rather increased than at all alleviated the matter. I would rather ask, Do *you* believe? That's the question. Let it go round and circulate among you! Dost thou believe on the Son of God? I am afraid that there are some here who are so far from believing for a righteousness, that they have never yet felt the need of a righteousness. "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves;" but, "if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins."

Come, then, fellow-sinner. Bring out your sin and confess it to God, and he will bring out his righteousness. Bring it out as Cranmer brought out his hand, which, in a moment of great bodily weakness, mental depression, stormy persecution, and strong temptation, signed away his faith—that hand which afterward signed also a recantation of his recantation, and an abjuration of his abjuration; and when he had recanted his recantation, and abjured his abjuration, the enemies of the truth brought him to the stake, when, before the flames had singed his hoary locks, he held out his

right hand, exclaiming, "This is it! This is the hand that signed! This is the hand that sinned! And," (thrusting it into the flames,) "let it perish first!" My fellow-sinner, bring out your sin, and Christ will bring out his righteousness. Come a little nearer! Come as near to him as the celebrated woman mentioned in the Gospel did, who wept so that she washed his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Yes! she brought tears and ointment; but neither of these brought her salvation. Her penitence brought the tears, and her zeal brought the ointment; but neither of these saved her. It was her *faith* that saved her! To put it as the Puritans would put it —to use their quaint mode of expression—when repentance comes, it comes with a big gushing tear; when patience comes with its broad back, it bears a heavy burden; when zeal comes, it comes with a flaming revenge; but when faith comes, it comes with an empty hand, to get all, take all, and carry all away. Lord, increase our faith!

Now, then, do *you* believe? The Lord help your unbelief! If you have believed, then you have experienced what the Apostle Paul calls "the peace of believing." Ah! there is no peace like that, just as there is no sweetness like the sweetness of the honeycomb. There are, doubtless, many sweet substances besides honey, but nothing is *so* sweet as it is. Why? Because the little laborious bee all the live-long summer is kissing and collecting from every flower its sweetness as it opens to the summer's sun on the mount-

ain's side or in the stretching glen; and after the laborer has kissed, collected, and collocated all the sweetness from thousands and tens of thousands of flowers, it mixes all up in its little laboratory, and the product is that sweetest of all sweet things—honey; and just because the honey is so very sweet because it is made in that particular way, so the "peace of believing" is so very precious because Christ has made it in his way. By the blood of the cross he obtained and procured it for us, and then handed it over to us by a deed of formal consignment, saying, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you."

What peace is this? Why, it is the very peace of God, which, it is said, "passeth all understanding." I cannot describe to you how profound it is, or how rich it is; I can merely say that it is the very opposite of the wretchedness of the unbeliever; and if you ask me to describe that wretchedness, how am I to do it? There is a description in the Gospel of a man who was possessed with a demon, and who cut himself with knives and stones, and, in company with other demons, horrible and execrable as himself, he spent his nights amid the tombs. That is a picture of wretchedness, than which I know of none more consummate and finished. The explanation of that is, the fiend in him boasted of himself that he was no common fiend; he said his name was "Legion." Just as the wretchedness of this man was so deep and consummate because it was no common fiend that possessed him, so is the peace

of the believer a profound peace because the name of its author is no common name. Just as all the flower is in the bud, just as all the day is in the dawn, just as all the man is in the child, so all peace is included in the peace of believing—peace with God and with conscience, peace on earth and in heaven; and all sorts of peace are in the peace of believing!

Now, then, I have merely to show you, for a moment, how believing in Christ for a righteousness insures conformity to law. "Do we make void the law through faith? God forbid; we establish the law." Here I will make use of a supposition, by way of illustration, which nothing but a miracle could enable you to realize. Suppose a man saw the law of God, and brought all his faculties but one to bear upon it. Suppose this faculty for a time was completely taken out of him, and put behind a curtain on this side of which he is sitting with the law of God before his eyes. It is man's recollectedness of his violation of this law that I propose to deprive him of, and place behind the curtain. Bereft of this, how he gazes with admiration on the beauty and glory of God's law, exclaiming, "How worthy is the Lawgiver!" Suppose another man beholding this one looking on that most holy thing, the law of God, which he has so openly and repeatedly violated, in this way. The spectator perceives that this poor man sees only half the truth, and that if this curtain were cut away, the whole truth would confront him. Seeing this, you strive to approach and lift the

vail. But you fear that you may do it so widely, indelicately, and incautiously, that ten thousand to one that when the reality came rushing on the poor man—that he was cursed by the law—he would dash it down, and fly away in despair, and become as the monster of malevolence to whom we have referred. But if you call on your fellow-men, what can they do? They are just as powerless as you are. If you called upon an angel, with his soft, quiet, delicate hand, what can he do? He cannot absolve him. It may be, moreover, that that angel is the very being whose business it is to summon this man to the solemn judgment. In this sore dilemma you fall down upon your knees, and exclaim, "Thou, and thou alone, O Jesus, canst do this! Thou wilt perform it wisely, delicately, tenderly, and mercifully. Thou, and thou alone, canst perform it with a due consideration of all the consequences; thou alone mayest lift the vail, for with that self-same hand with which thou unvailest his guilt thou wilt point him to pardon though thy bleeding side." What effect has the law of God upon him now? Does he dash it down and fly away from it? No! "O, how I love thy law!" he says; and then comes sanctification, justification, and righteousness—"even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference."

III. The universal application.

I pass on now to make some application of what has been said—for "there is no difference." "No

difference!" I apply this first, in directing you to the necessity which lies on every one of you to obtain the righteousness of God. O! my fellow-sinner, if you are without it you are living in peril every moment; and if you die without it, you are lost and undone forever! Do not turn round upon me and say, it is very unreasonable on my part to insist upon it, that every man shall stand side by side on the same platform for a righteousness—that all shall take exactly the same ground for this righteousness. Why? There is "no difference;" all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; there is none righteous—no, not one:" and, if there is no difference in the disease, why should there be any difference in the remedy? Some may sin oftener than others, and in a manner at once more provoking to God, and more injurious to society; but there is no really essential difference. I know that ten thousand sins will sink a sinner deeper into hell than one sin; but I also know that *one* sin is as *sufficient* to sink a man into hell as a million, though not so deep. Have we not had terrific experience of the effects of one sin? Take the case of Adam. It was not the ten thousand sins that followed the first, but that alone, which ruined the race. That one sin did it all, dashing the ship on the rock; that one transaction made bankrupt the entire human family; and "there is no difference."

Come down, then, my fellow-sinner, from your fancied superiority, and stand by the side of the chief of sinners, and cry, "God be merciful to me

a sinner;" for there is no difference in the encouragement held out to you. Why stand ye afar off? Draw nigh. You are as welcome to this blessing as any one who ever partook of it. Noah found it, David described it, Paul experienced it; but these men were not more welcome than you are; "for there is no difference." Christ called for a towel, and put off his upper garment, girded himself with a towel, took water, and washed the feet of his disciples. He is here now; but his basin is filled not with water, but with blood; and he is going around from row to row, and from individual to individual, through the mouth of his servant, offering to cleanse you *all* by his blood. Do you say you never can be clean? He says, "Let me try. Let me wash thee. My blood cleanseth from all unrighteousness. What if thy sins are as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; and though they be red like crimson, they shall be white as wool. Let me wash thee." There is no difference. Don't stand trembling there. Draw near! It is "unto *all*, and upon all them that believe." The only difference is between the believer and unbeliever.

What makes you tremble, sinner? Is the hawk abroad? Have you caught a glimpse of his fiery eye, of his sharp talons, and of his beak whetted for destruction? Once a little bird was perched on a tree in a gentleman's garden; a large fierce hawk perceived and pursued it from bough to bough, and from tree to tree, till at length the poor little terrified thing was almost overtaken,

and fled, as a last resort, to the bosom of the gentleman who was observing it. There it was safe from the talons of the hawk. Now, sinner, the hawk of justice is abroad after *you!* Fly! Fly! Come! "O! Whither? Whither? There is no refuge in earth or heaven!" Yes—there is. Escape to the Saviour's bleeding side. He is waiting to take you in and make you clean. Come to him, exclaiming—

> "Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
> Let me hide myself in thee."

In conclusion, let me say, first, how thankful I am to have such a Gospel as this to preach. I preach it with delight to perishing sinners. O! how admirably it suits their case! How exactly it accommodates itself to all their helplessness and vileness! Does music suit the ear, entering into the cavity, flowing along the channels reaching to the brain, and acting thence upon the soul —does music fit the ear? Does light fit the eye, coming off from the body of the sun, passing over objects in its way, entering the eye, acting through the brain upon the soul? How beautifully the light fits the eye! Does the key fit the lock, turning its wards, shooting its bolts, and removing all obstructions? Music does not fit the ear, the light does not fit the eye, the key does not fit the lock, so well as the Gospel fits the sinner; it so precisely meets his case. It is all he wants. I preach this Gospel with peasure. It is good tidings, and I announce them with joy—I publish

them with delight. Mine is the white flag. Mine is not the solemn trumpet of brass, but the silver trumpet of the glorious Gospel.

Let us take care that we do not imitate the Jews, in going about to establish our own righteousness. Don't you carry on that controversy any longer with your Maker. It was carried on by the Jews, and kept up by them generation after generation. Don't you keep it up and carry it on. Give up. Submit to establish the righteousness of God, which is Christ, the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. How thankful am I that I have such a method of righteousness to make known to you to-day! My tongue has described it, and, with its faltering accents, has told you of the righteousness of God. Accept—receive—embrace it! It is the power of God to every one that believeth, and shall we not communicate it to others? What! Shall we have this medicine of life and not hand it to others? Hold forth the word of life! Tell of the way of salvation! When I cease to speak of this righteousness, may my ministerial tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; and when I forget to proclaim it, may my right hand forget her cunning. I have no Gospel but this; there is none other; and he that believeth not shall be damned.

# VIII.

## THE WISDOM OF WINNING SOULS.

"He that winneth souls is wise."—PROVERBS xi, 30.

THE estimate which men form of spiritual things is very different from that which they form of temporal things. A spiritual evil is not so much the object of our alarm as temporal evil—a spiritual good is not so much the object of our ambition and pursuit as temporal good. An individual who is the victim of temporal evil excites our pity and kindles our compassion; but an individual perishing in ignorance and dying in sin excites no compassion. Now, this is what might have been expected to have been the case as to those who are avowedly infidels, who profess no sort of solicitude whatever, beyond that which terminates in the body and in time; but what, I say, is the case as to multitudes of those who make a profession of a belief in the inspiration of the Bible? And yet, many of those are quite indifferent to the spiritual wretchedness which is multiplied around them; and not only are they indifferent to it themselves, but they frown upon others who are endeavoring to meet it, and in some measure to diminish it. According to them we are, by our folly, our enthusiasm, and our fanaticism, turning the world upside down. Now, there must be a great error in

this, either in the faith or in the feelings of those who thus underrate our efforts—who not only do nothing toward them, but who scorn and sneer at those whose object it is to turn the sinner from the error of his ways.

I know that the objection which they bring forward often shrouds itself under this accusation —that what with our Sabbath-schools, and what with one thing and another, we shall absolutely eat up the substance of the land; and that there will be nothing left to clothe the orphan, to feed the hungry, to sustain the widow; and they affect to feel a powerful sympathy with the temporal ills of mankind — with the physical wretchedness of human nature, as it is multiplied around them; and yet I will venture to say—for we cannot stop now to go into the matter, but I throw it off as an assertion and I challenge any one to the proof of it, the most learned, the most historical, the most philosophical individual present—that Christianity, and Christianity alone, has done more for the relief of the temporal ills of mankind than ever was done by philosophy, human reason, human policy, human sagacity, or humanity itself, from the beginning of the world down to this hour. There never was a grosser fallacy than that which would teach and represent, that the influence of Sabbath-school institutions, and kindred institutions, will dry up the sources of relief for the temporal ills of mankind. But I will venture to say this much—that as to those societies and institutions, the object of which is the relief of the physical ills of mankind, you

will find it is not another set of names that occupy the reports of these institutions, from the names of those who fill the reports of your Sabbath-schools, your Bible Societies, your Mission Institutions, and your other confederacies for the diminution of spiritual evil; the fact is, they are the same individuals that contribute to both; and since the formation of Sabbath-schools and other kindred institutions, there has been far more done for the relief of the temporal ills of mankind than ever was done before.

And however much we may feel affected and distressed at the thought of the abounding of human wretchedness around us, there never was a time when so many feet were actually moving to the abodes of wretchedness, so many hands actually dealing out bounty for the relief of the needy, as at this time; and, therefore, I could not this evening, if my object was to plead for one of these institutions which aim at the relief of the physical distress of mankind, render such institutions more effectual service than by turning your attention to the spiritual evils of mankind; because I am quite sure of one thing—that the charity that shall address itself to that, will so warm and glow and dilate and expand itself there, that it will spread to the relief of all the ills of human nature.

"He," then, saith Solomon, "that winneth souls is wise." Perhaps you will say to me, Why take such a text as this to address us with? Why, it is a text which marks out the duty of ministers of religion. I grant, indeed, that it is our office and

prerogative, and that it ought to be our daily and nightly and hourly study and labor to fill up this character. But where is the text found? Did I announce it to you as a part of the epistle to Timothy? Did I read it out of the epistle of Paul to Titus? Did I read it out of any one of the seven letters which are contained in the last book of the Bible, and which were addressed to the ministers of the seven Asiatic Churches? No: I told you that the text was in the book of Proverbs, and that is the people's book more than the preacher's. And the text being found in the book of Proverbs, shows us that every man ought to address himself to this noble enterprise, and that it should not be considered as appropriate to ministers only; that it should not be considered as the peculiar and exclusive duty or prerogative of the ministers of religion, or those who fill certain offices in the Church, to endeavor to win souls, but that every man is summoned to arouse himself to this noble enterprise; for the text saith, "He that winneth souls is wise."

I propose this evening, First, to direct your attention to the object which is here proposed to our benevolent sympathies and regard—the souls of men. Secondly, to the duty which is here enjoined upon us in reference to this object—to win them. And, thirdly, we shall notice the commendation that is pronounced upon the man that winneth souls, "He that winneth souls is wise."

In selecting this subject, as being directly appro-

priate to the interesting occasion which has gathered us together at this time, I have at once in view the ultimate object of all Sabbath-school institutions; for although there are certain social and civil and domestic and intellectual advantages which infallibly must grow out of Sabbath-school institutions, their main, their cardinal, their ultimate object is the welfare of the souls of those who are their objects. This is what we have in view. And therefore I proceed to direct your attention to,

*First:* THE OBJECT HERE PROPOSED TO OUR BENEVOLENT SYMPATHY AND REGARD—THE SOUL OF MAN. Where shall I begin, or what words shall I employ, in discoursing to you of the soul; for, after all that philosophy and theology and poetry and oratory and history and ethics have written and said and sung about the human soul, what a mystery it is! The soul of man! Who of us understands it? In thinking on it, let us endeavor, for a single moment, to fix your attention on *the nature and frame of the human soul.* In nature, then, it is not material; it is spiritual and immaterial. Especially in addressing such an assembly as this, it would be improper to show, by any train of argument, how it is that the soul is spiritual; I will therefore adopt the only popular method of showing it, and that is, by showing that the body is divisible, or separable—that it is an aggregate of parts, a congeries of innumerable particles cemented together; and, therefore, when death ensues, the body crumbles to pieces; and that mass

which we now call the body becomes disjointed, and goes into a million fragments, and these are blown and wafted hither and thither; but the soul is a homogeneous substance—it is indivisible, insoluble, inseparable; and, therefore, when accidents happen to the body, with which the soul has now an affinity, or when a limb shall be taken away, or more limbs than one, or a considerable portion of the animal economy, the integrity of the soul remains untouched, indivisible, inseparable. The soul remains entire. No dissociation of the several parts and particles which go to make up the mass which we call the human body has any effect or influence whatever on the composition of the human soul—because the soul is not matter; if it were matter, it would be soluble, it would be divisible, and its parts would go to pieces; if it were matter, it would be resolvable; if it were matter, its parts and particles would be separable; but the soul is not separable, and therefore it is not matter. And if it is not matter, it is and must be spirit; for we know of no other substances but these two—matter and spirit, flesh and mind, body and soul—these make up the whole of what we know to have any existence in the universe of God.

Now, philosophers have speculated much about the locality of the soul in the body. It was the opinion of Aristotle—whose philosophy held such a potent sway over all Europe, and that for many centuries—that the soul of man had its local residence in the brain; and not, as the

popular philosophy teaches, in the whole volume of the two hemispheres of the brain, attached to the whole mass of it in the skull; but that the soul dwelt in a small gland in the brain, which is called the pineal gland—that it abode there as a bird in a cage—and gave forth from that very, very small glandular body all its volitions to the nerves, the nerves to the muscles, and the muscles acted on the bones; and so he accounted for the ordinary functions of life. Whether the soul is attached to any particular portion of the brain, or is associated with the whole nervous structure, ramified as it is over the whole body, I know not; nor do I think Aristotle knew; nor do I know that any of the old philosophers knew; nor am I presumptuous enough to say that any philosophers, even at this day, know. The subject is mysterious; and all that we know is, that the soul is, somehow or other, connected with the body; and that when the soul leaves the body the body dies, and then there ensues all those great physical changes on the body which make death so unwelcome to us. But it may be sufficient, at present, just to say, that the soul, in its nature and in its frame, is infinitely superior to the body; and that while the body is nothing but an accumulation of parts and particles, the soul is, in itself, a complete substance, and undergoes no change as to its essence, amid all the contingencies to which the body may be subject. The soul is spiritual and not material; and although it dwells in matter, it is perfectly and entirely distinct from it.

1. The soul of man! Shall we endeavor to form some estimate of it by noticing its *Maker*, its origin? Think of the human soul, then, as formed for eternity—as occupying all the attributes of Jehovah in its formation—as made in the true image of God—as made next in rank and degree, though equal in blessedness to the angelic multitude. But how has the gold become dim—how has the most fine gold been changed—how has the crown of our original dignity fallen from our head! And yet this jewel is left, though it is now encrusted only with sin; though it is not in the condition it was in when it came from the hands of its Maker, still there is that about it that tells us something of what it was. Just as the glory on the clouds of the western horizon, after the sun has set, tells us that the sun has been there, although it has set, so are there seen in the soul of man, in the wreck to which it has been subjected, traces and marks of its primeval glory and dignity. Such is the faculty of reason; and the power of conscience and the compunctions of remorse that attend the footsteps of the sinner record the power of the human conscience still.

2. Shall we endeavor to think of the human soul, by forming a notion of its *capacities and faculties and properties?* Think of its power of thought —of the recording pen of memory—of the tablet of the heart—of the creation of genius—the glow of enterprise—the light of reason—the voice of conscience; all proving to us that the soul of man is spiritual, intellectual, immaterial, immortal. You

may sublimate matter even to infinity—you may throw it from crucible to crucible—you may make it perform a million of transitions as to its form and condition; but you can never produce the power of thought from matter. No modification of it will ever give rise to a single thought; but the soul has the power of thought. Think, too, of its power of knowledge. Rivers have their limits, the ocean has its bounds, but the soul of man wanders on and on, exploring invisible and distant objects. It plunges into the abysses of creation, past and present—it ascends to the very footsteps of the eternal throne, to which it has been invited by the Saviour, and is stayed there only by the glory of him who sits upon it; and if, like the child of ambition, of whom history has told us, that when he had conquered the world he sat down and wept, because there were no more worlds to conquer—so, if the human soul ever could acquire so much knowledge as that it should suppose there was no more knowledge to gain, it, too, would weep, because it could acquire no more. If Sir Isaac Newton had been alive at this day, from the day in which he flourished, he would have been learning still. What a wonder is the human mind! and this power of knowledge which is the prerogative of it will be found throughout eternity to be one source of our happiness, one spring of our enjoyment.

3. Then, think of its *power of pleasing!* How it can charm by description—dazzle by comparison—enliven by wit—convince by argument—thrill,

captivate, and carry away by eloquence! Think of its power of acting on matter—in the glow of painting—in the symmetry of architecture—in the beauty of sculpture—in the enchanting tones of music, and all the vast variety of intonations of the human voice! For what is that which gives such endless variety to the intonations of the human voice? It is the soul that is within—it is the flood of thought and feeling that gives to the human voice that million-fold power and variety which it possesses. Think, too, of its power over matter! It can convey the spirit of discoveries to notes and tablets; and thus, after the spirit shall have fluttered away from the world, it will still be acting on minds generations off; and though it shall have left the world, yet, by having memorialized its own discoveries, and having committed them to something or other that shall hand them downward to posterity, man may be said to live onward, as it were, through an indefinite series.

4. But, in thinking of the soul, let me take the scriptural way, and the way which I am sure all of you will immediately sympathize with, in endeavoring to prove its value, and that is, by observing that the soul must be of inestimable value, for *its redemption has been effected by Jesus Christ.* I have intimated already that the soul of man is lost—that man has fallen from his high estate. O, what must be the value of the soul in the estimation of Almighty God, when he did not think it too much to give his own Son in order to ransom

it! God so loved the world—yes, God so loved the soul—now you shall estimate its value if you can—God so loved the soul that in order to redeem it and save it, he gave up his only begotten Son! O, go in devout contemplation to Gethsemane, and see the Son of God covered over with sweat and blood, and hear the plaintive accents which burst from his lips when he said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." Follow him to mount Calvary; to the bowing of his head and the giving up of the ghost. Yon sun hid its face, the earth wrapped itself in mourning, the rocks burst asunder—nature, to its very center, shook, and felt that her Lord was suffering and dying! O, if you can fathom the depth—if you can span the length—if you can soar to the height of the sufferings of the Son of God—if you can weigh the tears and the blood which he shed—if you can measure the sighs and the sobs that he heaved, then, but not till then, will you be able to learn the value of the human soul; for the Son of God gave up his life to ransom the soul of man. When we are, from certain circumstances, incapable of estimating the value of any given object that may be presented to our notice or contemplation, from our incapacity or the limited nature of our understanding and other mental faculties, if we can only find out, from some source or other, what the object cost, then we may form an idea of its value; and though the human soul mocks our efforts and eludes our touch—and though neither poetry, nor theology, nor philosophy, nor history, has ever

done it justice—yet we may know its value, in some sort, when we find out that God, in order to save it, gave up Jesus Christ, his only-begotten Son; and we do not wonder, therefore, that Jesus Christ should exclaim, as he did: "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

5. Again. In forming an estimate of the human soul, let us think for a moment—though this is a bewildering subject—on *the endless duration of the soul's existence.* There is only one word that can be applied to the duration of the human soul, and that is a word which you understand just as well as I do—which the peasant comprehends the meaning of as well as the philosopher—that is, the word ETERNITY. Eternity! Thou word of solemn and mysterious import, thou art the only word that can be applied to the duration of the soul of man! And what is eternity? The question has been asked again and again, and wise men and sages have answered it in different ways. I must confess, that the answer that has struck me as the most appropriate is the answer furnished by a boy in a Sunday-school. He was asked, What is eternity? After a pause the little boy said—not, indeed, a very little boy, but he was attending a Sunday-school—"Eternity is the life-time of the Almighty!" I defy a divine to give a better answer. I defy any man on earth to furnish a more satisfactory answer. Eternity, indeed, is the life-time of the Almighty! It is applicable to the life-time of the Almighty; as it is said *a parte ante,*

and *a parte post*—God is eternal as to the past part of his existence. The soul, however, is not eternal in that sense—it was created coeval with the body; but *a parte post*, that is, as the future part of its existence, the duration of the human soul to come, will run on in parallel lines with the duration of the throne of God. And as to the speculations which have been entered into by philosophers and divines, as to whether the soul is naturally immortal or not, I, for my part, can see no weight in the question; it is no matter whether it is so naturally, or as a special donation from heaven. All that we know is that it is so, somehow or other, either naturally or as a gift of God. It is enough for us to know that the soul is immortal—that it never, *never* dies. Like a mighty river, the track of which you can follow from region to region and from soil to soil, but which, at last, bewildered, you lose, by the river entering into a deep and embowered wood —you can follow it no further: the wood is so thick, the forest is so dense, you cannot go after it, but you hear it dashing on by the furiousness of its roar. So it is with the human soul; you can trace it to death, but you can go no further in your own observations. But we know that death does not terminate its existence —that it is immortal—that its existence runs on through endless ages. O, how valuable, then, is the human soul!

*Secondly* — THE CONDUCT DESCRIBED IN THE TEXT, IN REFERENCE TO THIS OBJECT, AND RECOM-

MENDED TO OUR ADOPTION BY THE WISE MAN—"He that winneth souls is wise."

I hardly need detain you for one moment in the way of a word of caution. By winning of souls, in the text, as applied to men, we are not to understand that we can win them as principals. No; it is only as instruments and accessories. Christ is the ransomer of the soul; that we have seen already, and that you will bear in your minds. He it is who hath won them—that hath bought them —that hath ransomed them—that hath purchased them—that hath done the great thing which we never could have done for them. But though we cannot win them as our principals, we may win them as instruments and accessories. This is what you are summoned to labor and to attempt to do. "He that winneth souls is wise." This has been rendered by a French commentator—"He that sweetly draweth souls to God maketh a holy conquest of them." And of all the versions of the golden sentence which I have taken for my text, there is none that seems to me to fall in with the meaning so fully as that of Didoret—"He that sweetly draweth souls to God maketh a holy conquest of them." Souls are not to be got by compulsion—souls are not to be driven. You may apply your instruments of torture to every inch of the surface of the body, and the body may be within sight and within feeling of death, but the soul will not be a slave, and spurns the thought of slavery. You know Mohammed pushed his conquest with the point and two edges of the sword; and

you know the mother of harlots has endeavored to ride over the world, to enslave the intellectual, and bend down the human soul, and bring souls to God in that way; but souls are not so to be got—they must be sweetly drawn, not dragged, not driven.

You know, especially, as far as the children of Sunday-schools are concerned, and all other children, that a sweetness of manner is preferable to power of argument; and though the power of argument may do something with some of the more philosophical and stoical members of the human family, yet that which is to win and fascinate and touch the heart of a child is the sweetness and softness of love. And, in fact, it is that which touches the heart of any man. He that knows well the mechanism of the human heart, has told us, that the cords of love and the bands of man are what must be used; and if you want to bind a man, you must not attempt to bind him down by the cable rope of philosophical argument, but by throwing around him the soft and silken cords of love. That, and that alone, will bind a man down.

As instruments, we are to labor to win souls. How, then, is it to be done?

First. We are to endeavor to win them *by instruction.* The soul of man is naturally ignorant. Knowledge is wanted—knowledge is delightful to the mind—knowledge is agreeable to the soul as light is to the eye or honey to the palate. The soul of man, when first created, was created in the

image of God—in the image of his knowledge. Now, I know that it is possible that knowledge might be communicated by miracle; but I have no right to expect that it will be so communicated. God might communicate knowledge to the mind of man directly, as he did to the minds of the prophets and apostles. There was a direct communication of knowledge, of the material, of the element of knowledge—a direct inspiration into the minds of the prophets and apostles; but we have no reason whatever to suppose that in that way knowledge will ever be communicated again. Knowledge is to be communicated, now, from mind to mind—from one to another. Thus the very prophets were to communicate what they had to the people; and thus the apostles were to go into all the world, to communicate their knowledge to every creature. Thus, then, the man who has knowledge is bound to communicate it to the man who has not.

And as to the method of communicating instruction, especially in a Sabbath-school—I am not talking about other schools—the language should be plain, familiar, and simple. Illustrations may be brought from science and nature; but this we must take care to do in such a way as to make all these as instruments, subservient to spiritual good. In the month of July or August, if you saw a cornfield covered with flowers of every hue and size and color, the spectator might be gratified with the sight, and the traveler might be amused with the spectacle; but not so the owner—the proprie-

tor, the farmer—he would have every flower torn up by the root and thrown over the hedge—he does not want his field covered with poppies, but with wheat.

Plainness of speech, then, is necessary. It is remarked of Job Orton, in his "Memoirs of Dr. Doddridge," that, having once preached about the primitive Christians, while walking one day a person came up to him and asked what sort of Christians the primitive Christians were? "I told him," said the biographer, "they were the first Christians; and I took care ever after to use the phrase first Christians, and not the primitive Christians." And so it is as to children; we should use easy and not hard words—words easily cut on the tablet of the memory, not those which are so tortuous as that they cannot be engraven in the youthful mind. We should teach them the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Parents, fathers, mothers, Sunday-school teachers, masters, altogether should adopt the resolution of the apostle, who thus expresses himself: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." "We preach Christ" in the dignity of his person, in the fullness of his love, in the excellence and the perfection of his sacrifice, and in the power of his Spirit—Christ first, Christ last, Christ the middle, Christ the beginning, Christ the end. Nothing will touch the heart of a child so soon or so deeply as to hear the story of the Babe of Bethlehem—of the Man of Sorrows on the hill of Calvary, in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea! Thus, then, let us commu-

nicate instruction, and by knowledge labor to win the souls of the children.

Secondly. We must do it *by persuasion:* for the soul is not only ignorant, but perverse. Its ignorance calls for illumination, and its perverseness and obstinacy call for entreaty and persuasion. Therefore we are to employ, as the means of persuasion, every argument and motive that can be drawn from the soul, in all its value—the love of God in giving his Son in order to save it—the solemnities of death—a day of judgment—the glory of heaven, and the terrors of hell. You must take the unconvinced up to Mount Sinai, that he may gaze on the mountain burning with fire; but you must take the humble and meek and penitent to Mount Calvary, and let the thunders of Sinai be quenched by the sweet accents of Calvary. Do not represent Sinai and Calvary as two hostile forts, but as two impregnable fortresses, to break down ignorance, depravity, and sin. An air of seriousness, finely softened down with affectionate tenderness, is that which we ought to endeavor to cultivate. Never court a grin when you should win a soul. Seriousness of manner, combined with affectionateness of spirit, are the charms we are to employ—the artillery we are to command. We are to clothe our words with plainness, seriousness, and affection, that an impression may be made on the minds of those to whom we direct our instructions.

Once more. It is our duty to endeavor to win souls *by admonition.* It is said of the venerable

Eli, who in many respects was an excellent character and a good man, that he did not admonish his children. It is necessary, sometimes, to rebuke with all authority and all earnestness; and Eli whispered when he should have thundered, and was all blandness and softness when he should have been all authority and majesty. There are times when we should use all the authority which God and providence and grace have intrusted to us. Thus, by solemn admonition, as well as by gentle persuasion and the words of instruction and wisdom, we should endeavor to be instrumental in winning the souls of our fellow-creatures.

But, *thirdly*, and lastly, I go on to stimulate you to this by THE EULOGIUM WHICH THE WISE MAN IN THE TEXT PRONOUNCES ON THE CONDUCT OF THOSE WHO WIN SOULS, "He that winneth souls is wise."

Now, wisdom has very great reputation among mankind: it has so high a reputation that you cannot pay a man a higher compliment than to say he is a wise man. Mankind have that feeling about the matter, and all are exceedingly sensitive about their reputation for wisdom and knowledge; and hence, you cannot offer a fouler reproach, a more poignant or cutting stigma, to a man than to say of him that he is a fool: every man feels that the indignity is an intolerable one—one that cannot and will not be put up with. Such, then, is the reputation of wisdom—so high—so universal. Now, Solomon says, "He that winneth souls is wise." I know very well that men differ very much about what makes up wisdom. For instance,

the politician considers that the knowledge of the art of government constitutes wisdom—that the man who is well versed in historical research in the history of nations, and understands the best mode of governing States and districts and empires, is the wise man. The philosopher considers the naturalist the wise man—he who knows all the substances of the three great kingdoms of nature, animal, vegetable, and mineral—who understands all their sympathies and antipathies, all their uses, all their good qualities and all their bad ones—who has taken the gauge of every substance in nature, from the sun down to the meanest atom that floats in the air, from the smallest insect that dances in the sunbeam to the gigantic elephant that stalks on the surface of the earth—who has studied nature and her laws, the chain of cause and effect, and can determine the relative value of one substance to all other substances around it; that is the man the philosopher supposes to be the wise man. Again: the moralist considers the knowledge of ethics as wisdom—that is, the knowledge that leads him to understand his own nature and the laws which are binding on society in general, and his duties and obligations toward God, his fellow-creatures, and all rational and intelligent beings. Now, then, who does the Bible pronounce to be the wise man? Is it your politician—versed in historic lore, competent to determine the fate of empires? Is it the naturalist or philosopher or chemist—the man that understands every thing in nature? Is it the moralist? Is it your ethical

man? Is it your man who understands the laws of the different relations binding the different orders of society? No, my friends. Who, then, does the scriptures pronounce to be the wise man? I will tell you—first, the man who saves his own soul; and, secondly, the man who labors to save the souls of others.

First. The Scriptures pronounce that man to be wise *who saves his own soul.* That was a benevolent expression of the man Moses, which he uttered with regard to the Israelites; when, after having led them for forty years during their peregrinations in the wilderness, he said, "O that they were wise!" —In what sense? "O that they understood this—that they would consider their latter end!" The man who is wise for time, but not for eternity—wise for business, but not for salvation—wise for the body, but not for the soul—is not a wise man. A man may be highly gifted—a man of talent; well, call him so, and have done with it; but call him not a wise man if he has not religion. A man may be rich and opulent; but if he neglects his soul and religion, call him not a wise man, call him a rich man, and have done with it. A man may have the gift of eloquence—the power of persuasion and of moving others around him may be hid under his tongue; very well; say he is an eloquent man, and have done with it; but if a man has not religion he is not a wise man. No man is wise but the man who saves his soul and prepares for eternity. It will be found, hereafter, to have been the most egregious, the most monstrous, the

most atrocious folly in the universe, for a man to have neglected the interests of his soul—to have been absorbed in the claims of his body, the claims of commerce, the claims of business, or any other claims whatever, while he has neglected those of his soul.

Secondly. The text pronounces that man to be wise that *is instrumental in winning the souls of his fellow-creatures.* I have not time to go into this; but there are three views which I meant to have taken, to follow up this doctrine in the text. First, I meant to have shown you that such a man, in his conduct, is promoting the honor and glory of God, and on that account may fairly be pronounced a wise man. Secondly, that such a man connects himself with the coming in of the mediatorial reign of our Immanuel, and on that account is to be termed a wise man. And, lastly, that the man who wins the souls of his fellow-creatures is the best friend of the human race, and most effectually promotes the welfare of mankind around him. Wherever souls are overlooked, there is a limit put to intellectual and social improvement, and ignorance becomes perpetuated.

Perhaps you may ask, What is the advantage which results from all this Sabbath-school instruction? The fact is that we are too impatient. In husbandry and benevolence matters are the same. In matters of husbandry and agriculture the farmer has to wait for the return of his labor. The fact is, that the process of Bible education is going on; and this Bible education is very much

like the process of engraving. Engraving is a slow process: the engraver works upon the metal, and perhaps it is many days or weeks before the effects are visible on the surface, and not even after months of toil, unless you hold the surface in some particular direction, so that the light may fall upon it in some particular way. But the engraver goes on working at his task, and by and by, after weeks and months, it starts up at last like a thing of life. So it is with these children. Engraving is going on upon these souls. A moral, religious, and Bible education is being communicated to them by the instrumentality of this institution; and we must not be too impatient as to the results that will follow.

Again. Schools are of considerable value in producing habits of social order and the worship of God in many families who were strangers to it before. I was once at a meeting in Nottingham, when a man stood up to give an account of his conversion to God. Laying his hand upon the head of a boy who was by the side of him, he said: "This boy is my son, and this, my son, is my spiritual father. He went to your Sunday-school some years ago. One Sabbath evening, when he came home he said, 'Father, if I die before you and go to heaven, I am afraid I cannot stretch out my hand to welcome you there.' 'Why not?' said the father, struck with the observation. 'Because,' said the boy, 'the teachers at the Sunday-school, and the Bible, and the preacher, all tell me that swearers, and Sabbath-breakers, and drunk-

ards, living and dying such, must, in the next world, be in a state of torment.'" Conviction seized the mind of this man, as he told us; he found his own way to the chapel; and the impressions that were made upon him there, together with what his little boy had said, were the means, under God, of his conversion.

I believe a great deal of this is going on now. I know that it is the order of nature for parents to teach their children; but I know it is an order that the God of nature and grace often smiles upon and blesses, for the children to teach their parents. I do not mind how the matter goes on, so that it does go on. It is with this as it is with the dew. Some say that the dew falls down—that it comes from the sky; but according to the most abstract and recondite philosophers, dew rises up from the earth—it ascends, and does not descend. I do not care whether it is down or up, or up or down, or down and up, or up and down, or both, so that it does but come, and enough of it, to refresh all the waste places of the earth. So with regard to knowledge: I do not care which way it is—whether it goes from the parents to the children, or from the children to the parents, or both ways—any way, every way—the more the better.

Still you want to know what are the fruits? The fact is, we are only sowing the seed; and the principles of virtue and piety which are cast into the minds of children remain there, concealed for a while; but they will awaken in some new asso-

ciations of life, and then there will be all the harvest you anticipate. I remember, some time ago, conversing with an individual who had been in Ireland, and who related the following fact to me. A little girl, of Catholic parents, found her way to the Protestant Sunday-school: there she made considerable progress, and she obtained a copy of the Testament as a present; that Testament she read, felt, and understood. One day the priest came into the house, and saw the book on the table: he immediately laid his hands upon it, and said, "What is that?" "That," said the mother, "is a book that has been given to my little girl by somebody." The priest found out what the book was, proceeded to the fire, put it into the fire, and stood by till the element of destruction had completed its work. The little girl then burst into tears, because her Testament was burned; and the mother wept, because she sympathized with her daughter; and while the mother and daughter were both in tears, this minister of mercy walked away. Well, the little girl felt so much for her mother that she turned to her and said, "Do not be so much distressed; for although the priest has burned the Testament, I have got the first nine chapters of the Gospel of St. Matthew by heart, and they cannot burn them!" Give the children that which cannot be burned. Amen.

# IX.

## OPENING BLIND EYES.

"I the Lord will give thee for a light of the Gentiles; to open blind eyes."—ISAIAH xlii, 6, 7.

WHAT a grievous affliction is blindness! An impenetrable gloom is spread over the outward world, and the unhappy individual is cut off from all agreeable interest in it. It was, therefore, no frivolous boon which Christ, in the days of his sojourn on earth, thought proper to confer, when, in the external sense, he opened blind eyes. In the paragraph of which the text is a part, it is quite clear that Jehovah is describing the Messiah in his spiritual character and spiritual work; and that, great as the marvel of removing natural blindness was, and great as similar miracles were which Christ performed, their principal value consisted in their being expressions and revelations of the Omnipotent power and grace of Him that performed them—as symbols and pledges of those spiritual operations which he could accomplish on the souls of men.

I must beg here to say, that I consider I have not the option of determining whether I shall expound this passage in a physical or a spiritual sense. I consider myself shut up to the exposition of it in the latter sense. I know no rule of interpretation of parallel Scriptures—of analogical

expressions in Scripture—safe, or certain, except this, namely: that if any one particular sentence or paragraph requires to be explained in a physical, natural, or literal sense, every other portion of the same sentence or paragraph must be explained in the same sense. On the other hand, if one part or parcel of a sentence must of necessity be explained in a metaphorical, moral, or evangelical sense, every other part or parcel of the same sentence or paragraph must be explained in the same way. Taking this rule of interpretation, then, I say, I am shut up at once to contemplate the language of the text in a moral, spiritual, and evangelical sense, and in that sense only.

As to the whole of the paragraph, it is this: "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house." I shall not stop here to justify the application of this to the Messiah, although I am aware that critics have said it is applicable to Cyrus and to the prophet Isaiah himself. Some learned Jews have affirmed that it is applicable to the Jewish people taken collectively; but I do not now enter on any of these proposed meanings. The rightful meaning, undoubtedly, as all our heads and hearts at once feel, is exclusively confined to the Messiah himself: "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and

give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house."

Now, I pause for a moment to inquire whether the Messiah, in the days of his sojourn on earth, ever brought any prisoners out of the prison-house? Did he ever open any prison doors, and emancipate any prisoners from the prison? He never opened a prison door literally, physically, or politically; that limb of the sentence, that member of the paragraph, therefore, must be interpreted metaphorically, morally, spiritually, evangelically; but if that member must be so interpreted, all the other members must be interpreted in the same mode; and if any doubt lingered on my mind for the fraction of a moment further, as to the legitimacy of this application, it would be entirely removed by the recollection that the words of the text were addressed by Christ himself to the principal instrument of preaching on an occasion the most interesting that ever occurred in the appointment of an instrument. But you are all beforehand with me in this. Of course I refer to the language addressed by Christ to Saul of Tarsus, when the light about him eclipsed the sun at noon day—when the voice fell upon him, and he fell down a bigot, a Pharisee, a persecutor, a b'asphemer, an injurious one, but rose up a penitent, a disciple, a believer, an apostle. Then these words were addressed to him: "I send thee to the Gentiles, to open their eyes, and to turn them

from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified." And whithersoever that principal instrument of preaching went he opened men's eyes. He had a home-striking nervousness of speech. He had a well of feeling which was never exhausted. The dew of heaven lay on his faculties, the fire of heaven was on his tongue and on his lips—signs and wonders followed his preaching—eyes were opened! souls were converted! God was glorified!

If I were going to restrict the meaning of the text, I might be releasing some of you from the attention you might have been disposed to have given to it; had I descanted on the wondrous glories attendant on the removal of natural blindness, I can very well suppose that I should have had your utmost attention; for temporal evils excite more attention than spiritual evils, and temporal blessings than spiritual blessings. Men seek for the removal of temporal calamities much more earnestly than they do for the removal of spiritual calamities. A man dying in ignorance, perishing for lack of knowledge, excites no sympathy; and this is the case not merely with infidels. With them it was to be expected, because the principles we assume are by them altogether denied; but we affirm it is the case with multitudes who profess to believe in the inspiration of the Bible, and to have confidence in the Divine origin of Christianity itself. Many of these reproach us with our

enthusiasm, our folly, our fanaticism, in "turning the world upside down."

No doubt we should relieve physical wretchedness; no doubt we should wipe away the tear which falls; no doubt we should staunch the physical misery which streams; no doubt we should visit our afflicted brother, to alleviate his temporal sorrows; but what if we have done so? Suppose we have watched him along the whole course of his earthly pilgrimage; suppose we have poured full many a sweet into his cup, and attended him to the last, but have done nothing for him morally and spiritually, but just fed his body and clothed his flesh, and neglected his soul altogether, and there we have left him in the jaws of death without any hope, and, what is worse, without a title to heaven, or, indeed, any moral adaptation to it. The man is gone! This sentence now is passed; it is irrevocable by prayers and tears. Now the folly and inconsistency of this can never be utterly explained away till you make out that the joys and the sorrows of the moment are equivalent to the joys and sorrows of eternity. But then it is said, "Why go to distant objects? Why do you not expend your enthusiasm and your energy on the objects of spiritual wretchedness which are near you?" Well, I can only say, that if persons do lay out their sympathies with foreign spiritual misery—that if persons do allow the tide of their liberality to flow forth to the mitigation of that fearful aggregate of spiritual misery in pagan lands—I can only say, that if they

exhaust the whole of their sympathies, and consume the whole of their energies in overtaking the distant spiritual horrors that prevail, and overlook the spiritual evils which are nearer them, I say, then, that this is an inconvenience arising out of directing so much attention to foreign objects, but I deny the force of the objection altogether. I maintain that the persons who do the most for the relief of foreign spiritual evils are the very persons that do the most for the relief of the whole spiritual wretchedness—they are the persons who do not wait for any romantic novel, or ostentatious scheme to be put before them; they are the persons to go on with that painstaking which never intermits, that zeal which never cools, that energy which is never exhausted. In overtaking the spiritual wretchedness which is at home, they may not always come up with other persons, who, when such an appeal is made as requires a heart of stone to resist it—when there is any spur of ostentation, or scheme, or charm of novelty—step forward as if by some galvanic influence, ever and anon, to do something which appears to promise the communication of good, but whose movements are so fitful that you can never account for them, or determine whether they proceed from principle, or whether they are hallowed by any religious motive. But I maintain again, that those who do the most for the relief of spiritual wretchedness abroad are those who do most for the relief of spiritual wretchedness at home.

I must now advert for a moment to the argu-

ment which I passed away from, namely, that the habit of affording relief to spiritual wretchedness has a tendency to make men indifferent as to the relief of temporal wretchedness; and hence we are told, that with all our missionary institutions, and so forth, there will be nothing done to feed the orphan and to clothe the naked. I will merely say, that where there is this charity to relieve spiritual calamities, it will, by a law of necessity, be so warmed and dilated as to extend itself to the alleviation of all the evils which afflict humanity. Does not all history and all philosophy prove that man is naturally a selfish being, and that he has selfish habits and motives? Cannot sin be overcome by some powerful influence upon the heart? What is this mighty destroyer of selfishness? Is there any charm of scholarship, or of philosophical illumination, which will lay the demon of covetousness? No! Nothing can overcome, crush, and annihilate the inherent selfishness of human nature but a power which is mightier than itself, and which is found only in the benignant influence of the Christian religion! A man's heart touched, moved, fermented, renovated by the Christian faith, is necessarily a charitable heart, and whatever evil afflicts humanity, its bodily or mental powers, or its moral condition—whatever ills afflict it in any of its great departments—touch the Christian, and he steps forward, with an angel's softness, I had almost said, to relieve that affliction, whether it be physical, mental, or moral.

It is said by those who advocate institutions to

relieve temporal afflictions, as opposed to those which relieve spiritual wretchedness—it is said by them that the good we propose to do of a temporal nature is certain, whereas the good attempted to be done of a spiritual nature is at best but problematical. Now, I cannot stop to deal fully with this argument against us; I can only say, that if it proves any thing it proves too much. Following that process of ratiocination, I might say, "You should not relieve a poor man, for you will perhaps lead him to neglect the performance of his own proper duties, and induce him to repose upon external aid!" I might say, "You should not relieve a sick man, for you will thereby perhaps interfere with the duties of kindred which ought to meet his case." I might say, "You should not relieve a distressed tradesman in his embarrassment, for you may perhaps lead him to neglect a diligent application afterward." Nay, I might go further, and say, "You should not teach children, for the knowledge you convey may perhaps be perverted, and the ability you form and foster may be directed to purposes of mischief." Will you, then, allow the force of this reasoning? No! you will not break up your schools, because of the mere possibility that some boy may pervert the knowledge given in those schools—you will not break up your almshouses, because by possibility some person may abuse the charity thus communicated, and if you will not admit the exceptions in such cases, why insist on the admission to the exceptions in the spiritual aspect of the question? I may just

say two things here: in the first place, it is our duty to do all the good we can to the bodies and souls of men, but especially to their souls; and, in the second place, I beg to say here, that if we perform our duty to the utmost of our ability, depending always for success on Him who is over all and above all, there is nothing more uncertain here than there is in every thing which lies in the womb of futurity. If we perform our duty, trusting in Him who has made it our duty, we shall not labor in vain; for though we may "sow in tears, we shall reap in joy."

I have to apologize for having departed in this manner from the subject itself in order to justify our application of the language of our text. I am aware that many persons have recourse to the objections I have stated; they are brought forward as bugbears to frighten men from Christian associations, which have for their object the removal of spiritual wretchedness. I shall now, then, proceed to ask your attention, *first*, to the great calamity which has involved our race in spiritual blindness; *secondly*, I shall crave your attention to a remark on the great ordinance of Jehovah for the removal of this calamity; and, *thirdly*, I shall ask your indulgence while I make an observation or two on the grandeur of that operation of the Spirit, the power of God, by which the removal of this spiritual blindness is effected. "I the Lord will give thee for a light of the Gentiles; to open blind eyes." O that that stream of illumination may fall on this assembly! Consider what I say,

and may the Lord give you understanding in all things!

I. THE CALAMITY OF SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS WHICH HAS OVERTAKEN OUR RACE.

You would very greatly aggravate the evil of natural blindness by dilating on the numerous and diversified beauties of nature—on the splendor of those ethereal vaults, the firmament above us, those dots of beauteous light which garnish that firmament, the richness of the chaste moon walking in her silvery brightness, on the regal magnificence of the glorious sun in his mighty channel, on the beauty of what has been aptly designated "the human face divine,"—if you dwell on this external beauty, gracefulness, and loveliness, the more you go on with your descriptions of external beauty, the more you aggravate the calamity of natural blindness; for the poor blind man sees none of these things! But, O! how much greater is the calamity by which the soul is excluded from the sight of the glory of God! It is the soul which is struck with blindness. It is not the destruction of the soul, or any part of it; it is not the destruction of the faculties—thank God! the catastrophe is not so serious as that—but it is the calamity of blindness triumphing in the midst of faculties otherwise noble, and rich, and glorious. Such a calamity must be regarded as an expression of Divine displeasure. God will not permit his glories to be polluted by being gazed upon by that which is vile and abominable; hence we are led to observe:—

1. That there is very high criminality connected with the *origin* of this spiritual blindness. The Divine displeasure never arises without a cause, or beyond the cause. What, then, must have been the cause which led to such a fatal condition? And here I have to ask the question, and state the fact—the simple, incontestable, and melancholy fact is, that man has sinned! Here I am led to inquire whether he had not a difficulty as to keeping the law of his Creator, (or was he broken down in his feelings,) to account for his thus dashing against the throne of his lawgiver? Had he any pain which weakened his moral nature? Was there any sorrow which debilitated his intellectual or moral energies? What was his condition? So far from that, I find that he was in the enjoyment of the image of God in high perfection; that he was walking about, lord of Eden; that he had dominion over the realms of nature; that he was in Christ-like purity, consummate felicity, with no tale of want or sorrow; and that he did, while in that condition, dash the ship on the rock, and bankrupted himself and all his posterity! I do not propose to stop here to answer any of those cavilings which have been brought forward as to the scriptural narrative of the origin of this spiritual blindness, feeling that, in this place and on this unique occasion, I am relieved from the necessity of dealing with such objections.

2. I now stop, further, just to observe, that as there was high criminality connected with the origin of this blindness, so there is high criminality

connected with the *continuance* of it. If men, struck with this blindness, were to humble themselves on account of it; if they were on their knees, weeping for their catastrophe which has overtaken them; if I found them agonizing for the removal of this calamity, it would be some alleviation of the matter. But, generally, I find men taking advantage of their blindness, and receding farther and farther from God; and, indeed, many of them seem never to be so completely happy as when they have most effectually succeeded in banishing all thought of God, and all consideration of his existence. Ah, yes! every-where I find men, as I have said, not deprived of their faculties, but I find them perverting the use of their faculties. They have faculties by which they can accumulate physical, literary, scientific, and political knowledge; but I find that very knowledge, to the unconverted man, has the effect of moral poison; it often puffs up and encourages him.

3. I go one step farther, and say, that this spiritual blindness is so complete that it leads a man to *pervert the very instruments which God has appointed for its removal.* They give themselves up to sin by a perverted use of the Scriptures—the very book which should be a "light unto their feet, and a lamp unto their path," that very book, by the action of this blindness, is turned into an instrument for augmenting vanity.

4. I will now just ask you to go with me, and take an observation of the *state of mankind* around us, and see whether or not it sustains this descrip-

tion. Mankind are divided into Jews and Gentiles. What is the state of the Gentiles? I shall ask not for any learning on your part to ascertain that darkness. In characterizing the Gentile nations, I bring forward no learning on my own part to substantiate it. I ask you to go along with the great preacher whose name I mentioned in the beginning. Accompany him in some of his journies, and watch the condition in which he found the people everywhere; and then accompany some of your own missionaries to the scenes of their labors, and listen to their accounts of the moral condition of the people they went to. I find Paul going down to a place called Lystra, where they absolutely said he was a divinity, and proceeded to worship him. They called aloud to the priests of the city to bring oxen and adorn them with garlands, and to make haste; for it was a great day, for the gods had come down among them. What blindness! When he came to Athens, going along that abode of learning and folly—for they go strikingly together, sometimes—going along the streets of that city, he says, "I beheld an altar with this inscription, 'To the unknown God,'" as if this admission of their ignorance were better than all their pretensions to knowledge. There were some men—there are many among the Gentiles—whose notion of God was that he did not concern himself about the inhabitants of this world; such was the notion of the Epicurean philosophers, and such is the notion of some of our own philosophers; but if you come to that conclusion you will have no religion at all.

On the other hand, they would have gods almost innumerable—for valleys, fountains, towns, villages —hateful, changeful, passionate, unjust, revengeful —take a heathen man, with all his heathen habits and vices, and clothe him with immortality, and you have a heathen God!

But I need not dwell on the state of the Gentiles: just turn, for a moment, to the condition of the Jews, either at the time of Christ's arrival, or at the present time, or at any intervening period you may think proper to mention. When Christ came, they had lost the true idea of God; where the idea of God is not pure, the people are not disciples. It is not the *power* of God which is so distasteful, for men are fond of power; neither is God disliked for his wisdom, which they are not averse to; but the thing in God which is distasteful to man, whether Jew or Gentile, is his spirituality! The Jews had lost the idea of God; they had no idea of his mercy, holiness, and spirituality. "Darkness covered the world, and gross darkness the minds of the people." I shall pass away from any description of the state of the Gentile nations at the present moment; but the fact is, that darkness still covers the Gentile nations in general. That darkness came abroad from Egypt. As it passed through different countries it underwent some changes, according to the climates and physiological differences of the inhabitants of these climates. The darkness altered its phases, but never diminished in its blackness. I will now remark on the next part of the subject:—

II. The great ordinance of Jehovah for the removal of this calamity.

In order that I may not trespass too much on your time I shall restrict myself here, confining my remarks to the light which Christ throws on the character of God above us—providence around us—immortality before us—and the spirituality required within us.

1. See what light He has thrown on *the character of God!* When he was on earth he spoke with the voice of a man, he saw with the eyes of a man, he felt with the nerves of a man. God manifest in the flesh, standing on earth, looking up to heaven, stretched forth his hand, and appealed to God, when he said, "Father, I have manifested thy name, I have declared it, and I will declare it." "No man hath seen God at any time: the only-begotten of the Father, he hath revealed him." O! those works—"*He hath* revealed *him!*" Heathenism, philosophy, political sagacity, worldly wisdom, in all their varieties, never could penetrate the clouds round about the throne of the Eternal; but Christ, "the only-begotten of the Father, he hath revealed him." Jesus Christ has given us the true character of God. He has given him out as a God of love—as a father waiting for the return of a prodigal son, looking down the road, watching his approach, hastening to meet him, falling on his neck and kissing him; and the moment the prodigal confesses his sins, the father says to the servants, "bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; put a ring on his finger, and shoes

on his feet;" and in that one revelation of God what beauties shine!—what interest! God sent his Son, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. "God *so* loved the world THAT he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have eternal life." Read that beautiful episode between Isaac and Abraham, when God told Abraham to offer his son Isaac. Isaac said, on the way, "Father, here is the wood, and the fire, and the knife, but where is the lamb?" That is the question! Where is the lamb? "My son," said Abraham, "God will provide himself a lamb," in the Welsh version it is rendered, "God will *look unto himself for the lamb.*" Anywhere else he would have looked in vain; his own son was the lamb, panting to be offered up. Man lays on the altar, bound for justice, which must be satisfied, while the voice of infinite mercy is heard, and justice laid not its hand on man, for a lamb was provided! Man was saved and blessed, while Christ was offered. As a lamb, he endured all the penalty of our sin; he drank the cup, he exhausted it, and plunged the empty cup into the river of the water of life! He tasted death for every man.

2. Let me now ask your attention while I consider, for a moment, the light which He has thrown on *the providence around us.* The difficulties of the virtuous, and the shouting success of the villainous, almost seemed, to conscientious men, to indicate very bad management on the part of God to

allow this discrepancy, and they have had recourse to a great many theories in order to explain it.

I shall not stop to trouble you with theories which the heathen had to solve the enigma, which the things around presented, in the successes of the villainous whom they considered most abominable; but Christ has thrown light on the afflictions which happen to the people of God. They have not flesh made of sterner stuff than other men's flesh—their goods may be rapidly consumed in the flames of a conflagration as the goods of other men—their children may be carried away by means of fevers and consumption, as well as the children of other men. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous;" but Christ has thrown light on this matter. Now, when God comes forth with his chastisement it is but as a visiting God, who will leave us in a richer state, and in a better mood, with regard to him as presiding over all these things, pressing them all into our real welfare. The state of order, beauty, and harmony which characterized our world at first has been disturbed by sin, which has thrown all into confusion and disorder; and now we find that, in order to rectify all, a mediator is provided to arrange matters; and He does not merely act the part of a propitiatory, and an atoning sacrifice, but all things are put under his management. There he sits behind a visible screen-work of second causes, touching the springs of providence, regulating all the movements of his people, like the musician when he

touches the springs of an instrument with such delicacy that he scarcely knows himself to be touching them, yet out rushes the melody. Christ sits on high, pressing all his influence into the cause of his Church. The light of the Gospel may well be called a marvelous light. Now our horizon is dark and cloudy, but we behold a bright spot in the center; and that beautiful spot is traveling toward the circumference, and the whole cloud will presently become luminous; "and all things shall work together for good to them that walk uprightly."

3. I might here beat out the gold leaf, and unlap its petals; but I forbear, and just observe that Christ has thrown light not merely on God above us, and on providence around us, but on *that immortality which is before us.* Look, then, at the poor heathen who still fall down and worship the workmanship of their own hands, gazing forward to that beautiful island where they will in future live with the Great Spirit. In their broken accents we find the remains of the inward consciousness of a future immortality which God has stamped on the human heart. These poor heathen expect to get this immortality by sacrifices and offerings, and hence they drink out of the skulls of their enemies; but Christ has "brought immortality to light by the Gospel." He tells us that heaven is not to be got at by any sacrifices of ours. God has no appetite for bloody offerings; Christ tells us that immortality is just another gift from him who is infinite in goodness,

and that the gift of immortality is by Christ the Mediator. Look at the case of the children of Israel; they had finished their forty years' journey in the wilderness—they began to see the green fields of Canaan while the Jordan rolled between, and till they got over it they did not actually come into the promised land. How did they get over it without bridges, boats, or fords? They are now drawn out on the side of the river—while standing there, the priests come forward with the ark of the covenant, and go down with it to the water. When they touched the stream the waters divided, and they passed over. When they had all got over—drove after drove, and family after family—when the last man of the last tribe had gone over, the priests themselves went over, and when the last priest reached the shore the waters rolled together, and they were all in the land of spices, the land of the promises—Canaan! Thus, you see, "Christ is the way, the truth, and the life." Salvation, therefore, is not to be obtained by sacrifices; but Christ, "having overcome the sharpness of death, hath opened the kingdom of heaven *to all believers!*"

4. Let us now dwell, for a moment, on the light Christ has thrown on *the spiritualities which are required within us.* "I am the light of the world," he says; and *when* did he say this? In the morning at an early hour—for he was early engaged at his work—he was found early in the temple speaking to the people. The Pharisees, too, were there early at the work of detraction. They brought

to him a woman taken in adultery, and craved a deliverance from him touching her case. But he "wrote on the ground." What it was that he wrote we do not know, and the persons present probably did not: but he wrote something on their conscience; they knew what *that* was; and they went away one after another. They felt the hand of a master rifling their bosoms of all their secrets. Away they went; and, as they went, Christ called out, "Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?" and she said, "No man, Lord." Then Jesus said unto her, "Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more." Then it was that he said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." I can comprehend how it is that a philosopher might come even out of the kraal of the Hottentot, or an astronomer from some band of marauders in a barbarous region; but how a saint comes out of a sinner, how the beauties of holiness gather about human nature, how the sin gets out and the holiness gets in, how the heir of heaven supplies the place of the heir of hell, this I cannot comprehend; but we know that Christ is the light of the world. I do not wonder that when he delivered his Sermon on the Mount—that exquisite description of purity and spirituality—I do not wonder, as the people descended the mountain side, that they should say, "Never man spake as this man; for he spake as one having authority, and not as the scribes." If we were to see the

most beautiful eastern flowers growing in our northern latitude, developing all their beau ies around us, we should be surprised. If we found them crawling on the margin of a volcano, as on the ashes round a furnace, we should be surprised and astonished; but to see the beauties of holiness growing in this sinful world, on the very margin of hell itself, this is a spectacle! "But Christ is a light unto the Gentiles, and he that follows him shall not walk in darkness." Go out into the green fields, and behold the little dew-drop as it glistens on the ears of corn, looking up to the sun, and asking him to kiss it, and impart some new chemical properties to it. Now it gradually finds its way down the stem to the root, strengthening, supporting, and extending; and we have soon the full corn in the ear. That is the way God works with matter. See him at work with light in the morning, when the sun is coming forth from his chambers, beautifying creation—shedding his beauteous coloring before him, that we may behold where he is. He goes up and on till he reaches his meridian splendor. But to see God working on the soul, on spiritual substances, getting the blindness away and the light in—sin away and salvation in! But I cannot stop to describe the process at length, and shall only notice one or two stages of it.

First of all, there is a *conviction of spiritual blindness.* This is not what they have naturally. They say they see, and are not in want of any thing. They say they are rich, blessed with the powers of vision, and every thing else. But now comes

the law with its living fires; it is a flaming beacon in our world, lifting up a majestic voice in favor of holiness, and spirituality, and justice of the one sovereign Lawgiver, Creator, and Judge. The law flashes in the conscience of the sinner, drags him here, presses him there, and chases him yonder, removing all the envelopes about him, and, coming down upon him, it says, "*Thou art the man!*" Preaching does this. Sometimes it effects it in multitudes of persons at once, as on the day of Pentecost, when "three thousand were pricked to the heart,"—convicted on the spot. And we want this power—we want these conversions—one here and another there; now they happen by *units*, then it was by thousands. God grant that this rapid multiplication may commence among us here!

When this conviction of spiritual blindness takes place, there comes an earnest cry for its removal, like the cry of those two blind men by the wayside. They heard the Light-bringer was in the road, and these two blind men lifted up their voices, and cried, saying, "Jesus! thou Son of David, have mercy on us!" And when this earnest cry comes, it is a very rapid movement then. With Christ to hear was to feel; the blind men came and received their sight. Now, do not, therefore, be afraid of *sudden conversions* when they occur. You should of course examine them, to prevent deceptive appearances; but sudden conversions are not impossible, nay, more, they are not improbable.

Look at that man running up the tree there to get a sight of Jesus! that publican, to whose house he afterward went. In goes the Life-bringer, the Salvation-bringer! and almost immediately he opens his coffers, and says if he has wronged any man he will restore unto him fourfold. Look at that woman weeping at Jesus' feet, and washing them with her tears. O, when the life comes, it is speedy; as in the beginning many preparatory steps have been gone through, but the introduction of the light is quick and powerful. Now comes the joy of deliverance, which is equivalent to the previous gloom; it is equal to all the previous wretchedness. For my part, I do not wonder, that, when a man gets this light into his soul, he should be overjoyed. You remember the story of a young woman who lived to the age of eighteen without seeing at all. Dr. Boyle watched the performance of an operation upon her, and he has described, as only a philosopher could describe, what took place. For some time they were afraid she would lose her reason, so overcome was she by the innumerable beauties which so suddenly burst in upon her. If Boyle had been an emperor, it would have been worth his while to have watched, and written down the sensations of this young woman, and also his own sensations, when watching the process by which a young woman who had reached her eighteenth year received her sight. Sir Isaac Newton himself, when a flash of light, shooting in upon his intellectual vision, revealed a great law of nature, his intellect was so much

excited that he could not go on. He reveled, and was intoxicated with intellectual joy; and he handed over the question to cooler minds, to trace out its after stages. And if he reveled in the glories of increased intellectual vision—shall we not allow this joy in a girl bursting from eighteen years of physical blindness? If Isaac Newton felt the ecstasies of intellectual light, shall we not allow it when the light of salvation flashes in on the dark mind of a poor sinner? What power there is in the word of God, preached—yes, preached!—it is like the electric fluid; you cannot calculate the rapidity of its action. How is that electric fluid produced? It is said, you must take certain substances and place them in certain relations to each other; and unless they are all there, you will have no electricity. Some say preaching alone will not do it; but I say it is your living word, through a living agent, which is the primary means—the short solution of apostolical success. The hand of the Lord was with them, and multitudes believed and turned to the Lord. I do not think a person just converted is able to give a very minute account of the beauty which comes streaming in upon his soul—the glories of redemption, or the grandeur of immortality—but he has a feeling of the general luster streaming in. "This is life eternal; to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." This illumination is produced by humiliation of soul, as in the case of the patriarch Job, who, when his soul was swelling with pride, challenged the

Almighty to observe his case. But as the Lord showed him his grandeur as physical Creator, he stopped at every stage of it, and the impression produced was, "As is his power, so is his holiness; and as is his greatness, so is his mercy;" and at length, when Job had been conducted round the cycle, he said, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eyes seeth thee: wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." The same effect was produced in a case inferior to Job's; but I am encroaching on your time, and must hasten to a conclusion.

In the first place, let us pour out a lamentation over the spiritual wretchedness of mankind. O, how many of our fellow-creatures are sitting in the regions of the valley of the shadow of death! Put on the wheels of mercy to travail in birth for them. You cannot remedy their case by mere intellectual tutorship, or political orthodoxy, or civilizing processes. I do not say you cannot ameliorate their condition by such agencies. You may take away the external roughness, but civilization and scholarship are powerless in the soul: Christianity alone "will make all things new." The heathen have received the light and rejoiced in it, and swell out the praise of the Light-bringer, by whom they have been translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. What light has been thrown on the character and providence of God in your lives! What streams of illumination of that immortality have reached your soul! Do not let your religion be

so stinted, your acknowledgments of his greatness so measured; swell out the praises of the Light-bringer!

Perhaps some of you, who have come here on this great day—some of you, who have come here to further the movement for sending out light to distant lands, are yet yourselves in the dark! Your own souls, perhaps, are dark—dark amid the blaze of Gospel day! If the light which is in *you* be darkness, how great is that darkness! O, thou poor blind sinner! send up your cry before the shades of eternal darkness envelop thee! And here I am reminded of one of the sayings of that illustrious man in whose house I am permitted to stand. He describes the sinner as a poor blind man led by a dog with a string. He gropes on and on, and at last puts his stick into a vacancy, and he is gone! O, you poor blind sinner, then do not take another step in the dark! But I must pass away from you, and before my voice ceases—before this service closes—cry to the Son of David to have mercy on thee! And you that have the light, take care that you use your utmost efforts to diffuse it. Not mental light! No! no! We do not get light merely from the sun, but by the aid of reflecting bodies—light streams from the great orb of day, falls on the reflecting bodies, and it is struck off again; but when it falls on black substances, it is absorbed. When it falls on light surfaces, it is not all absorbed, some of it is reflected. And I call on you Christian people, "Arise and shine, for your light is come!"

# X.

## THE JUDGMENT.

"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every-where to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."—ACTS xvii, 30, 31.

THERE are some religious truths—we may call them religious from their general bearing and character—to which the light of reason seems to assist us in some degree, and which we draw, in the way of inference, from what we call the light of nature. In this way we make some inferences concerning the being and natural perfections of God, if not concerning some of his moral perfections. "The invisible things of God" are, in some degree, declared, revealed, or confessed by the things that are visible. The works of God, overshadowed as they are by what has befallen our world, in consequence of the moral revolution which has been perpetrated by its inhabitants—the works of God, in some sort, reveal the character of God. But all the notices which are conveyed by the light of nature, and all the deductions that we are able to make by the processes of reasoning, are, after all, ambiguous, feeble, fallible, and comparatively uninfluential. There is a vail upon the understanding of man, and the hiero-

glyphical character of truth concerning God, ourselves, our responsibility, futurity, eternity, are but little read by the thoughtless, depraved, feverish, fallen sons of men. Therefore, how thankful we should be for this book, which speaks so forcibly, clearly, strongly, distinctly—so distinctly, that if there previously existed a perversion, by reason of some false system of education, the truth must be apprehended if the book be read carefully and meditated upon. Here "life and immortality are brought to light;" and the doctrine of our accountableness to God stands out clearly on the page of revelation; such a sort of *relievo* is given to it on the surface of the book, that, wherever we look in the volume of inspiration—the incontrovertible fact, the eloquent fact of our accountableness to God, meets our attention.

These words, which I have read for our meditation, were spoken by a remarkable person, and in a remarkable place, to a remarkable auditory. The preacher who uttered these words was Paul—a man brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, at the feet of Divine truth, much taught of man, but much more taught of God; a man of great faculties, lofty powers, vast acquirements, distinguished courage, unquenchable ardor, singular fortitude and patience; a man that never quailed before his enemies, that never altered the truth to make it palatable to an audience; a man that preached so that judges, and princes, and philosophers trembled beneath his convincing and forcible statements of

the truth. These words were spoken in a remarkable place; for they were delivered in Athens—a proud city, a learned city, a renowned city, a city of philosophers. And they were delivered to a remarkable auditory, consisting of poets, philosophers, legislators, orators.

In addressing these people, the apostle first of all—as the great fundamental truth of all religion, the foundation of all morality, the basis of all virtue—asserts the supremacy of God. He is led to make a declaration of this from that which he witnessed in walking about their city: "Ye men of Athens," said he, "I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, To THE UNKNOWN GOD." That is, ye are so much given to the worship of idols, ye are so solicitous to worship all sorts of gods, that, for fear ye should overlook any, ye have actually an altar "to the unknown God." Then the apostle, from that discovery, from that fact, sets forth to them the whole truth concerning God—concerning themselves—concerning the world—concerning the judgment to come. "Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you —God that made the world and all things therein." This was a mode of speech they were not accustomed to; this was a style of address surprising to them: the apostle here speaks of *one* God. "God that made the world, and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelling not in temples made with hands;

neither worshiped with men's hands"—that is, images of gold, wood, iron, or stone, however curiously carved or wrought by the art of man. "God is not worshiped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord,"—here he comes to the practical bearing of this truth which he had before declared—"that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: for in him we live"—O, yes! there is no man who does not live in God. The wicked man lives in God; and there is a sense in which even the devil lives in God. We all live in him, we have our existence by his will. "For in him we live, and move, and have our being." And in order to bespeak their attention still further, he shows an intimate acquaintance with their own writers, and cites passages from their own writers which they were in the habit of referring to. "As certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch, then, as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device." And then comes the text: "And the times of this ignorance"—that is, the state in which men do suppose that God is to be worshiped by images—"the

times of this ignorance God winked at:" not that he connives at sin or evil in any place; but God, in some sort, may be said to have winked at the former times of ignorance and error. When we think of the prevalence of idolatry and superstition, we are apt to ask, Where is the wisdom of this state of things? And when we think of darkness having covered the earth so long, we are apt to say, Where is the mercy of suffering whole nations for centuries and millenniums to know not the worship of the true God? We are tempted to ask, Where is the justice of suffering millions of immortal beings to be buried in the shades of idolatry and superstition? But all these questions are met and silenced by the apostle in the text. "And the times of this ignorance God winked at." He will not call the men who lived in them to such a reckoning as he will call us: they had not the revelation you now have. But, though "the times of this ignorance God winked at, he now commandeth all men every-where to repent: because he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."

I propose, *first*, to notice what God commanded; and then, *secondly*, why he commanded it: what he commanded of "all men every-where to repent;" and why he commanded them—"because he hath appointed a day" of judgment, in which every person will be tried at the bar of God.

I. I do not intend to occupy much of your time on the first point—AS TO WHAT GOD COMMANDS.

1. He hath commanded men "to repent," he hath commanded all men "every-where to repent," *now*. He addresses idolaters, that they should renounce their idolatry, abandon their false gods, and become worshipers of the true God; that *now* the true God has declared they shall immediately bow down before him; and that instead of being seduced any longer by the lying vanities of Paganism, they should yield the homage of their spirits to the living and true God. You and I have not to repent in that sense: our forefathers had. When the first heralds of salvation alighted on our shores, they had to call on our forefathers to repent of their Druidical superstitions, as Paul had to call on these Athenian philosophers—idolaters—to repent. But now, blessed be God! their summons has so echoed amid the valleys of our island, their summons has now so prevailed, that there is not an altar of Druidical worship to be found; there is not such a shrine at which a single human being is performing his devotions. This is the triumph gained by our holy religion.

But there is another sense in which God calls us to repent. You know, that by nature and practice you are sinners, guilty of rebellion against God, guilty of treason against the majesty on high —that you have displeased God from your heart, and that you have in your heart idols. For, after all, idolatry may exist in the heart of an Indian or

a Briton—in the heart of a Druid or of a nominal Christian who has no experimental acquaintance with "the truth as it is in Jesus," and who has never thrown off his sins by an individual and voluntary repentance.

2. Now, the radical meaning of repentance, its great and primary sense, is *change*—change of mind, change of disposition, change of conduct. When we are converted, God is regarded by us in a very different light to that in which he was regarded when we were living in a state of sin. If we allow the abstract omnipresence of God, still we fritter away the force of it by saying he is above regarding our conduct or ways—that he would not be severe to punish, nor strict to mark our obliquities, our errors, our failures. But when our views alter, God appears as a holy God, faithful and true, as well as a merciful God and a loving God. Our views alter also as to the law of God. While we are living in sin we have partial views of the law of God; we regard the mere letter of it, and pervert and twist it to suit our own depraved habits. But when we repent, the commandment comes home, the law assumes another aspect; it then appears "holy, and just, and good;" we are no longer satisfied with allowing the force of the letter of it, but we admit the spirit of it. We then come to understand, that "if a man looketh on a woman to lust after her, he hath committed adultery with her already in his heart,"—"that if a man is angry with his brother, he is a murderer." We come, now, to take quite different views of

the law of God, very different views of sin, which was thought often to be a trifle, an accidental evil, an obliquity, more to be pitied than blamed —a thing, somehow or other, incorporated with our faculties and mixed up with our very essence, and for which we are more to be excused than condemned. But when we repent, we have no such covering for sin; sin, then, appears a hateful and an abominable thing, and we would tear it from our bosom, and abhor it as an accursed thing. Our views of Christ change also; he is apprehended in a very different style to that in which he was apprehended before. He is, now, "all our salvation and all our desire;" he now appears "our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption;" light, life, all in all. There is, in short, a total alteration of our views.

Some persons accuse us poor preachers of disturbing the minds of our hearers when persons are alarmed under the ministry of the Gospel. The very purpose for which it was sent was to alarm men's minds, and it fails altogether when it does not alarm. When the ministry of the Gospel alarms the sinner, he sees its workings going on in his bosom: it comes out before his friends and companions; they ask him why he should sacrifice himself to that sort of teaching which disturbs and agitates him? Why, my friends, *we* do not bring the things there that are discovered—it is the light that reveals them; they were all there before—it is the light that falls upon things—and then they appear in a very different manner; and the minis-

try of the Gospel is designed and constituted to make the darkness light, to convince the sinner, and to awaken the impenitent. I pray God, and hope in God, that some sinner—why should I say some *one* sinner? why not *many*, *many?* for many here are sinners—may be pricked to the heart! and that they may undergo, even while they are listening to the sound of the Gospel from the lips of the preacher, this change and experience, this repentance.

3. Then, there is a *change of disposition*, consequent upon a change of view and change of mind. That which before was hated is now loved; the Bible that before was disliked is now venerated; the Saviour that before was denied is now believed and accepted; religion, which before was thought to be something suitable only for the aged, sick, infirm, dying people, now appears as the "one thing needful." Then, there is a *change of conduct:* for if the mind is changed, and the disposition is changed, the behavior is changed. Hence, that great preacher, John the Baptist, when he preached to the people in the wilderness, told them to "bring forth fruits meet for repentance:" he told the soldiers to be gentle and moderate, and to be "content with their wages;" he told the publicans to cultivate honesty, and to extort no more than was plainly due, and insisted upon practical proof. This is the case wherever the Gospel takes hold of the heart: it changes the heart, renews the mind, and you are at once renewed. If the tree be good, the fruit must be good: make

the fountain sweet, and the waters that gush from it must be sweet too.

God, then, commandeth men to repent. He commandeth all men—the poor and the rich—kings and their subjects—the young, the middle-aged, and the old. *The young.* I shall not address myself particularly to you to-night, because I have not time nor opportunity; but you remember what we said to you not a long time ago—that you must not live under the fallacy that religion is not suitable to you. *The middle-aged.* They, indeed, say they have no time for religion, they are so involved in the business of life. The great business of life is to be concerned for the soul and to prepare for judgment. Why, a man will find that he has lived in vain if he is not thus concerned for his soul; and he will have to say what a very learned man in all worldly learning once said, "I have spent life in laboriously doing nothing." You are commanded to repent. There is something affecting in the consideration of *an aged sinner*—of a man who has had life given him to prepare for eternity, and from whom it has nearly all ebbed away. It is the eleventh hour with him, and with some it is past the eleventh hour. But, remember, God commandeth you "to repent:" he sends the summons once more; and though one foot is in the grave, and the head white with age, and the heart black with crime, yet after all you may repent:—

> "For while the lamp holds out to burn,
> The vilest sinner may return."

And God commands us all "every-where to repent."

II. I pass on to show THE REASON WHY THE COMMAND IS GIVEN. "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained."

The certainty of a day of judgment is taught by *reason*, as we said before. We observe the conduct of men around us: we sometimes see that the virtuous are rewarded, are taken care of, are amply provided for; but we often see the reverse of that: and if we believe in the doctrine of the Divine government at all, we must suppose there is some state after this in which all these discrepancies will be adjusted, in which all these unevennesses will be made straight. *Conscience* tells us there will be a day of judgment. The conscience it is that interprets the character upon the wall; the conscience it is that says to us, "Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting." Again, we are confirmed in this opinion by *the general belief of the Church of God in all ages.* It has been the sentiment of all good men, of all virtuous men, of all the Church of God in every part of the world: they have all believed in a future judgment: it has been an article of their creed, and a substantial part of it.

But we have a full revelation, as I said before, in the *Word of God.* The great white throne will be set, and the books will be opened, and the judgment will proceed, and every man will be judged out of the things that are in the book. We are told that "God shall come, and shall not

keep silence; a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him." We are told that "every one of us shall give an account of himself to God,"—that "we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ." There are numerous, innumerable passages, indeed, in which this doctrine is clearly stated in Scripture; there is special evidence given of it in the text, by the resurrection of Christ from the dead: "He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." The resurrection of Christ from the dead, wherever it is known, is an indubitable evidence of a future judgment; it is teaching the doctrine, in fact, by example.

1. Then, observe, too, *the period* appointed for this process: "He hath appointed a day." The time is fixed; it is ordained; it is determined; nothing can postpone it, nothing can antedate it. When the time appointed in the councils of heaven shall arrive, no contingencies, no events, no revolutions in the universe can postpone it. God hath appointed a day: the time is a limited time, and is called "a day." A day is a measured period—so long, and no longer—such a measure of duration, and nothing further. We know not how long this day will be: "One day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." There may be time enough, however, afforded for a determinate examination of every individual to

be judged. "Then shall come the end," the close of the day of judgment; and at the close of the day of judgment "Christ shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father." His last judicial act is a mediatorial act—that is, the final work of Jesus Christ in his mediatorial capacity; and when Christ shall have accomplished all, then comes the consummation—the end of all things. That which had been given him to do he will then have finished—absolutely finished as Mediator; and he will deliver up the trust which he hath received from the Father, and God will be all in all.

The actual arrival of this day is unknown to us: "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." This is wise: if we knew the time there would be certain inconveniences resulting from our knowledge. There would be great inconvenience as to the wicked, and considerable inconveniences and disadvantages as to the good. The wicked, who presume as it is, would then presume much more; the good would then, in all probability, relax in their zeal, and assiduity, and painstaking. There is great uncertainty thrown over the time, and that uncertainty is in wisdom to us. "Watch, therefore, for ye know not the day nor the hour when the Son of man cometh." In one sense, the day of our death will be a sort of rehearsal of the judgment-day: as far as we are individually concerned, our dying day will be the judgment-day to us; a short, and complete, and decisive rehearsal will then take place of our whole

life, conduct, and character. But the last day, the great day of common assize, the general judgment, is distant, future—will take place at the end of the world. If every man were to be judged on his committing a single act of sin, it would throw every thing into confusion, and society would be disturbed. All nations of men have certain fixed days—assize days, public days—in which the interests of the community are maintained, and in which the conduct of guilty individuals is investigated—in which the majesty of law, truth, justice, and order are vindicated. It is so in the government of God; the grand assize of the human race is future, distant, but certain. The day is marked in the counsels of eternity, and will certainly come to pass.

2. Observe the *Person* who is to preside over the solemnities of that day. It is as much as if God had said, "Repent, because there is a day of judgment:" but, then, to make the matter more forcible, if possible, he says, "I have appointed the man Jesus Christ the Judge." The sinner cannot object to that, because the man Christ Jesus died to save him; and if the man Christ Jesus condemns him, he must, indeed, deserve to be condemned. The saint cannot object to that, because he has actually obtained his fellowship with Christ on earth; and, therefore, he sees in the person of the Judge, his Brother, his Friend, his Redeemer. He "now commandeth all men every-where to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that

man whom he hath ordained." That is the occasion on which the human nature of Christ will be exalted; that is one part of the reward which the Father will give to the Son for his mediatorial acts. The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father." Whoever presides over the solemnities of the judgment-day must be omniscient; he must be capable of estimating the motives and principles which actuate us; for there is a tincture diffused over every action from the internal spring that occasions it. Our actions are perpetrated under a certain combination of circumstances; and in perpetrating them, we are assisted by good angels and hindered by bad ones. Whoever judges man must know how he was hin lered and how he was assisted; he must be a person of perfect equity and absolute perfection; he must, in short, be God. Therefore, the human nature that must sit on the throne of judgment will be the human nature in connection with one of the persons of the Godhead. The man Christ Jesus will judge us, but the man Christ is the Son of God; for his appointment as Judge is itself an evidence of his being God. In fact, when we shall be judged, angels and devils will be judged with us; and he that is to judge us, is to judge angels—is to judge fallen angels. And, remember, every man's case will differ from another's; we cannot be thrown into groups and classes; but every man's case differs from every other. The very thought of it is perplexing and

confounding to our intellect; and we, at the moment, must be convinced that the individual who is able to preside over all these solemnities, must be infinite and eternal—God.

3. Observe *the process* itself—that "He will judge the world in righteousness." There will be scrutiny, separation, decision, execution. Ah! those eyes that are like a flame—those eyes that see into all the depths of the human heart, will scrutinize every individual character. "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and our children forever." God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ. There is, perhaps, not an individual here this night who has not done, said, or thought that which, if others knew, would cover him with confusion, shame, and distress. O, what an unfolding of history, character, and conduct will take place at the last great day of judgment!

There will be *separation*—the good from the bad, the righteous from the wicked, the believer from the unbeliever: and the separation will be so complete that not one sinner will be found in the congregation of the righteous, nor one righteous in the congregation of the wicked. The King, the Judge, shall separate men "as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats;" and he shall put the sheep on the right hand, and the goats on the left.

Then comes *the decision.* The sentence upon the righteous shall be, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." It has been well

said, that there is music, love, heaven, in every word of that sentence: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you." This intimates to you the vastness of our future felicity. But then the other sentence is equally strong: "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." If there is heaven in every word of the other sentence, there is hell in every word of this. It is a solemn fact, that the sentence which will determine our fate for ever and ever is not unknown; we know it beforehand: one of these two sentences will be addressed to every one who is now in the presence of God. "He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained:" therefore, he "commandeth all men every-where to repent."

I now come to the practical lesson to be derived from this subject.

We learn, first of all, a lesson of *confirmation of our faith.* I do not know that any of you are speculative believers in the doctrine of a future judgment. Perhaps there is an individual here who is prepared to deny it; but there are many young people who know but little as to the evidence on which it rests; and as they are liable to be assailed by the objections of infidels, and the doubts of their own minds, and the temptations of Satan, it is of great importance for them to come to know the ground of their faith, and to "be ready to give a reason for the faith that is in them unto every one that asketh of thee."

Then, observe, we should have a lesson *of self-examination.* Are we prepared for this process? We must undergo it; nothing can take us out of it; nothing can exempt us from it; every one must stand at the judgment-seat of Christ: there is no one too exalted to be allowed to escape—no one too obscure to be passed over. Every one—you and I, and each and all of us, must be there. Are we, then, prepared for that solemnity? Are we repenting? for we are "commanded to repent." Are we believing? for "he that believeth" only "shall be saved." Are we putting on the Lord Jesus Christ? for he is our wisdom, righteousness, and strength. Do you know Christ? Are you found with him? Are you one with him? Are you united to him by a living faith? They shall stand in the judgment who know him as their Saviour and their Friend, and they *alone.*

We may gather, also, a reason for *diligence.* The day of reckoning is coming. The certain man, the nobleman, the prince, the monarch who has given to us certain talents, and gone into a far country, will come again; and He will summon us into his presence; and he will say unto us, "Give an account of your stewardship;" and we shall have to render up, before his tribunal, an account of our fidelity to the trust which we have received from him. And then, as the judgment is coming, as the judgment will be set, as the reckoning will be gone through, let us be stimulated to do whatever we have to do, that we give up our account, at last, "with joy and not with grief." Let every

one of us be stewards of the gift of God. Let us rather so live that we may hear the voice of the Judge addressing himself unto us, and saying, "Come, ye good and faithful servants: you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you rulers over many things: enter ye into the joy of your Lord." As sure as we are in this house to-night, so sure we shall stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. As sure as you are hearing my voice, so sure you must hear the voice of the Son of God. As sure as the trumpet of the Gospel is now sounding in your ears, the judgment-trumpet will sound in your ears by and by. Whether you hear the silver trumpet of the Gospel or not, whether you heed it or not, you must *hear* and you must *heed* the *last* trumpet. You cannot go back. God grant that the sound of the last trumpet may be welcome to our ears; that as we listen to its tones we may lift up our heads from the grave, and lift them up without blushing; and as we behold the Judge ascending, may we behold him, saying, "This is our God, he will come and save us; lo! this is our God, we will rejoice and be glad in his salvation!" Amen.

# XI.

## RELIGION IN SOCIAL LIFE.

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."—EPHESIANS v, 25, 27.

THERE exists to a lamentable extent a want of correct application among professed Christians as to the bearing that Christianity has upon common life—upon household duties—upon domestic, social, every-day practice and behavior. There are some who reverence religion, and know a little about it, who consider it a lofty and sacred thing, not to be meddled with except on Sabbath days, and in the sanctuary, and at the sacramental table, and at baptisms. Hence I find that many persons are more than ordinarily serious before a baptism in our families, just before a sacrament in the chapel. They consider religion as eminently fitted for what may be called the great exigencies of human life, the grand emergencies of man's existence. They think it pre-eminently qualified to meet the case of some desolating affliction: they find that in the instance of the occurrence of some huge, unlooked-for calamity, there is nothing to soothe the mind—nothing to buoy up the feelings—nothing to bear up the spirit under the shock and the pressure, but

religion; and in the moment of these solemn and vast calamities they are for falling back upon religion. They will allow that religion is pre-eminently fitted to bear up a man in the crisis of nature, in the solemnities of separation from one world and of the arrival at another; that when a man must cross the line, whether he will or no, that separates between time and eternity, between finite and infinite, then religion is all important; in that solemn crisis there is nothing but religion that will do.

But I find that although men are quite willing generally to concede all this to religion, to concede to religion its paramount fitness to meet the great solemnities of a man's history, they exclude it from common life—from domestic duties—from household affairs. But religion is not to be so excluded: religion is like the providence of our Creator, which directs the movements of Saturn and of Jupiter in their vast orbits, and directs with equal precision the flight of the sparrow—that directs the fortunes of the solar system, and yet as minutely watches over the fortunes of every hair on our heads; like the great providence of God, which presides over all the orbs of the sky, and over all space, and over all beings, however various. So it is with Christianity; it comes round us—it takes hold of us—it never lets us go. Whether a man be a father, or a husband, or a master, whatever situation he occupies, Christianity meets him—Christianity finds him—Christianity addresses him as he is, and tells him what is his duty, and what his influence.

There are scattered over the epistles that which comes home to the duties of life; and that is one reason, I think, why the Gospels are preferred to the epistles. I am not surprised that children prefer the Gospels to the epistles, because they are made up of narrative, and narrative will hold a child's attention by the hour; therefore I am not surprised that children prefer the evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, to the epistles; but the same preference which characterizes children very much characterizes grown persons, though there is a similar reason for this preference to that which I find existing on the part of the children. Children prefer Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, because Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are just history—are just narrative—because they are full of incident; but I find that grown people also prefer Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, to the epistolary parts of the New Testament, because the epistolary parts of the New Testament come home to the duties of life, and teach a man in every situation in which the providence of God has placed him.

Nothing would be easier than to point out many of the illustrations which are scattered over the epistolary writings of the New Testament as expressive of the adaptation of Christianity to man; but I take the one that is presented to us in the text: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might

present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

This is one of those texts in the writings of St. Paul which prove that his style of writing is that which is called the *discursive* style; that is to say, as soon as he mentions a thought, he writes that thought down, or employs another hand to write it for him, (for he usually employed an amanuensis:) no sooner has one thought thrilled through his intellect than that thought, by taking hold of his intellect, so enlarges it that instantly another thought comes across his mind, and he stops to give utterance to the next thought, and then he goes on with another which has grown out of that; and thus (so to speak) he builds an arch of deviation, one bold sentence springing out of another. His sentences are not one single arch, but as soon as one arch is sprung up another rises upon that, tier upon tier, and after completing a series of arches of deviation from the first thought, he comes back to the first thought: all these arches of deviation, in the mean time, not having weakened the original thought, but having buttressed it up, and made it more energetic and commanding than if it stood alone.

So in the text: "Husbands," says the apostle, "love your wives." Who would have thought that when the apostle called on husbands to love their wives, that he would have enforced that duty by the mighty master-truths of Christianity, as he does? "Husbands, love your wives, even

as Christ also loved the Church." The very mention of Christ loving the Church kindled the soul of Paul: off he springs with his arch of deviation. Christ love the Church! Yes, says he, "and gave himself for it, that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." What he was aiming at was the purity of social love, the purity of social manners, the rooting up of the infection and the impurity which had mixed itself with the habits of the people, and bringing them under the influence of social, domestic, and moral manners. Think you, he says, of the purity which Christ has intended to bring back into his Church, which is nothing but a family: the Church is a family—a great compact; and what is the purpose of Christ concerning his family, the Church? "Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it; that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

It is not my intention to hold your consideration further, at present, to the duties enjoined by the apostle in the text, but rather to dwell on the import of those essential truths on which he bases the duty; namely, on Christ's love to the Church, and the demonstration of that love which the apostle mentions in this splendid passage—one of the finest that ever sprung out of his intellect, one of the richest that his pen ever touched. In this single text alone the whole structure of salvation

comes out before us, laying its foundation in the eternal love of Christ, having its pinnacles soaring to the unfathomable heights of heaven's eternal glory; having its foundation in the eternal love of Christ, and its capital, its cornice, its summit, in the sublimities and glories of the eternal heavens. I invite your attention to this subject to-night. May the Holy Spirit enable me to bring it out, and enable your minds rightly to apprehend it!

It is the love of Christ to the Church which is spoken of by the apostle. It will be necessary, first, to consider the CONDITION OF MANKIND ON WHOM THIS LOVE WAS BESTOWED. There was nothing in that condition that could have prompted it; there was every thing in the condition of man to prevent, to obviate its efflux toward mankind.

In the first place, we look at *the condition* of mankind. It is a condition of gross and palpable impurity—a condition of extreme loathsomeness. You may sometimes find among your fellow-creatures forms and combinations of physical wretchedness exceedingly loathsome, exceedingly offensive to the contemplation. But there is no combination of circumstances of extreme wretchedness which the sick bed in a hospital ever accumulated, or which imaginations working on the materials of actual life could ever form—no such combination would be an adequate representation of the wretchedness of human nature. I think I am right when I say that the feeling of aversion,

the feeling of distaste, the feeling of loathing, of abhorrence, of repulsion, which the most refined, sublimated, spiritual natures in the universe feel toward sin, are approbation itself compared with the intense loathing which God has toward it. The things in the universe which to us are the emblems of all that is celestially pure, of all that is absolutely sinless, that is utterly immaculate, that is ethereally clearest—the things in nature that are the emblems to us of all that is transcendently spotless, are unclean in God's sight. He looks to the moon—(O that fine passage in the book of Job! All the philosophy of six thousand years is embodied in the book of Job)—he looks to the moon, and the chaste moon shineth not. He looks to the heavens, to the unsullied ether—to the stars, those clarified points of light—he looks to them, and they shine not; "Yea, the stars are not pure in his sight." No wonder the patriarch goes on to say, "How much less man, that is a worm; and the son of man, which is a worm?" How much more abominable and filthy is a man that drinketh iniquity as the ox drinketh water!

In addition to the impurity of man, which must be so loathsome to the eye of God, there is another thing which we must mention, and that is, *the guilt* of man. While the guilt of man made it obnoxious to Him who is the supreme moral nature of the universe, the guilt of man made it extremely offensive to him who is the moral Ruler of the universe; and while God's moral essence

revolts from our moral depravity, God's moral rectitude revolts from our moral guilt: while the essence of the Deity recoils from the impurity of our sin, the grandeur of the majesty of the Lawgiver of the universe binds him down to regard our sin as the object of severest condemnation.

Do not mistake me here. I do not intimate that the feeling with which God regards sin, and the feeling of anger toward it, are any thing like what we call anger in ourselves. Anger in us is a passion; anger in us is a fitful thing; anger in us is a thing perturbed, a thing tumultuous, a thing irregular: the anger which God feels at sin is a totally different thing. I am considering the condition of man. I cannot say God did not pity his condition: there was enough in the contemplation of the deep and awful consequences of sin to excite pity in the mind of God—such pity as we know he feels toward the wholly undone—such pity as Jesus Christ himself felt when he went to Jerusalem and beheld its towers and its battlements, and listened to the tramp of the feet of its population, and when, beholding the dark and unbelieving condition of its inhabitants, he wept over it, saying, "O that thou hadst known, even thou at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." Such pity as the husband feels on the bench—such pity as he felt the other day in pronouncing over that monster of crime the most just sentence of the law:* the judge knowing that that

* Alluding to *Greenacre*, the murderer.

sentence was righteous by the laws of the land, quailed as he pronounced it; his voice trembled—it was choked with pity; his nature was dissolved; but the law—the eternal majesty and truth of the law—must be maintained. And so it is with God: he has a yearning pity over mankind; a melting, throbbing tenderness over human guilt and wretchedness. But there are purposes in the divine nature to which the divine compassion must give way; there are rights in the universe to which the feelings of individuals, of those individuals who have sunk their own rights, who have extinguished their own rights, must give way: there are rights in the universe which are not to be sacrificed, even to meet the feelings of those individuals who have murdered their own rights, and have utterly annihilated them. So it is with God: he is a God of truth, a God of order: he has to maintain the universe, he is to prevent it from rushing into confusion, and to keep it in its beautiful condition of perfect mechanism; and therefore God, as the God of order, must regard the iniquity of mankind with indignant abhorrence; he must consider it as an object of condemnation; albeit, all the while he has a feeling of pity toward the individual guilty of it.

I do not know whether I make myself clearly understood. The meaning is just this—that the love in the mind of Christ, in the bosom of the Son of God, his love to our nature, must have been a most powerful spring, a most intense feeling; one that rushed over all difficulties, and flowed in

upon the human race. In spite of its depravity, and in spite of its guilt, Christ loved us.

But love is not to be estimated by words; love is to be estimated by *deeds.* The love of a human being is not to be measured by the mere professions of a human being; the love of a human being is to be measured by the deeds which it performs as the testimony of love. So with Christ: his love to our world is not to be measured by sayings, but by doings; not by words, but by things; not by sentences, but by sacrifice. Hear what the apostle says on this subject: "Christ loved the Church, *and gave himself* for it." Here was a miracle wrought on the very threshold of the scheme of our redemption. The miracle was, to prepare a person who should be competent to carry out this purpose of love, and execute the scheme of redemption. Now the first step which the love of Christ achieved for his Church was a miracle in his own person. Into the mystery of the Godhead, of there being three persons and but one God, the Godhead not being mortal but spiritual; the Godhead existing in the form and the character of three persons and one God, the essence indivisible, the persons co-eternal: into that mystery of the Godhead there had to be interwoven another mystery. Before the scheme of redemption could be carried out into the Godhead, had there to be interwoven manhood; into the nature of him that loved, the nature of the Church that was loved had, somehow or other, to be incorporated. To prepare a person who, by the sacrifice of himself,

might effect all the purposes of redeeming love, a man had to be made who, when made, would be Jehovah's fellow; a child had to be born, who, when he was born, would be God's Son. Christ, therefore, the light of eternity and the head of the universe, for the love which he bore us did not think it too much to appear in our nature, in the likeness of the sinner, in the form of a servant; he did not think it too much to take into wedlock with his own eternal nature our human nature. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."

Still further, to notice the extent of the love of Christ to the Church we must consider *the humiliation* which that love led Christ to undergo for the Church. "He gave himself up for us;" he gave himself unto death for us; he took hold of human nature. The immortal was incapable of dying, therefore the immortal became human. Because mortality could die, and immortality could not die, he took upon himself our mortal nature; so that, though immortal in himself, being mortal in one part he might be capable of dying for his Church.

It is an axiom of biblical truth, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend;" and we have here and there a beautiful, though dim, legend of some heroic husband, some heroic wife, who for the love which they bore to each other did literally die for each other. There are in the facts of profane history a few dim, shadowy outlines, a few scanty, disheveled notices of such occurrences as these—that when the oracle gave any individual the alternative of

dying for another, some such individuals have counted it a sweet and sacred thing to die, and have died for the love of another—for their wife, for their husband. Such are the tales of profane history, (and there are not half a dozen of them in the six thousand years of this world's history,) such the stories that have come down to us of the triumphs of human love, of the achievements of human affection. But there is not one recorded of a person dying for his *enemy*. We have instances of a person dying for his friend—an attached friend. No doubt David or Jonathan would have died the one for the other. David would have died for Jonathan, or Jonathan would have died for David, if there had been occasion, such was the love they bore to one another. But the love of Christ was not for his friends, but for his adversaries; not for his lovers, but for his enemies. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that God loved us, and gave himself for us."

I am sure you will agree with me when I go on to say, that in speaking of the love of Christ for us, which led him to taste death for us, we do not give any thing like a proper representation of that love, unless, when we say he died for us, we go on to say *what kind of death* he died for us. We fail in the representation unless we go on with the apostle, and say, he "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross;" a death the most terrific of all the forms of cruelty which the ingenious cruelties of human kind have inflicted on the worst members of the human race; a form of death

which, according to the great Roman orator Cicero, ought to be forever banished from the eyes, and ears, and imaginations of men; a form of death concentrating in itself the greatest amount of public infamy, with the highest intensity of individual suffering: and that was the death which Christ, who loved the Church, endured for the love he bore to it.

Permit me still further to say, that the kind of death which, for the love of the Church, Christ endured, over and above all the circumstances in it which meet in other cases of that sort, there were great peculiarities in his case. At that time, you are aware, when Christ's human nature was occupied—I was going to say overladen—when his human cup of suffering was more than full, when the human nature of Christ was already occupied and overladen, that was the moment selected by Satan to assault him; that was the crisis chosen by the powers of darkness to assault him; and therefore, said the Saviour, "Now is your hour and the power of darkness." Satan had assaulted him all along. He had assaulted him in the wilderness, he had assaulted him in the garden; but the assault made on the cross exceeded all former assaults, and therefore Christ said, "Now Satan cometh," as if he had never come before: "Now is your hour, and the power of darkness."

Over and above these sufferings, which environed the man Christ Jesus as he hung on the cross, there was another that wrung him with most bitter anguish—that clave his soul in twain—that

rent him with untold sorrow; and that was the hiding of the Father's countenance. O, what must it have been to Christ, who had lived eternally in the radiance of the smile of his Father, to know that he was then regarded by the Father as if he had been a sinner; to know and to feel that he was treated then as if all the imputed guilt of the world which lay on him had been his own! For the one mysterious moment the man Christ Jesus was deserted of his Father, he felt as though the light of the universe was blotted out. A darkness —a thick darkness—a darkness that might be felt, pressed on his spirit, and an unimaginable chill fell on his pure soul, so that he cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And then, when he felt that the atonement which he was offering up for the sin of the world—for the redemption of the Church; when he felt that that atonement was accepted, the dark eclipse which had come over Calvary, the shuddering earth which had felt the terrible eclipse, all became tranquil; the sun burst forth, and in the sudden and unexpected light the universe was glad. "Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it."

I beg here to inquire, What was it that induced Jesus Christ thus to give himself up to die? Was it any love of fame—abstract firmness for suffering —any bluntness in his nature to the infliction of pain? O no: how finely was his human nature hung with those chords that vibrate through the soul! How exquisitely was his body hung with

those nerves that convey to the spirit of man the anguish that touches every pore! What was it, then, made him suffer? It was love. There was no power superior to his own that could have overpowered him, and make him submit to this. We are forced, then, to the conclusion which the apostle gives us, that it was love; love so amazing, so divine: it was the exuberance of affection, the triumph of generosity—a burst of independent affection, an ocean of infinite regard. It is a love that angels do not understand, that I do not understand, that you do not understand; a mystery of love, to fathom which, to span which, to weigh which, to measure which, to ponder which, forms the bliss of angels and "the spirits of just men made perfect."

In the connection of these words the apostle teaches us the entire spontaneity—the entire freeness—the absolute voluntariness of all this proceeding on the part of Jesus Christ. He says, "He *gave* himself." It is not necessary that I detain you here, as an illustration of this, with mention of those manifold passages of Scripture which Christ delivered himself, in his intercourse with the disciples and with the world, which expressed this same thing: one or two references shall be sufficient. On one occasion, when the people were coming out against him as a common thief, with swords and staves, with the assistance of the civil officers, to take him, with one tranquil word which he spake to them they all fell back, more than if smitten by the thunderbolts of war.

Rome's hardest sons, Rome's most massive men, quailed; they fell to the earth, they licked the dust, before the Man of Calvary, who spake a single quiet word to them. "No man," saith he, "taketh my life from me,"—not all the concentrated power of Rome. "I lay down my life, and I take it up again." What did he say to his disciples when he found them trembling; when he was on the threshold of his final agony? "What!" said he, "think you not that I could pray to my Father, and he would give me legions of angels!" celestial beings which should come flashing down in floods of light to rescue my human nature if that were in remote jeopardy. See him as he ascended the fatal hill of Calvary; see the meekness that sat upon his lips, while omnipotence slumbered in his arm. See his behavior on Calvary's brow, and nailed to the tree, when his enemies seemed for one moment to relax at the agony they were inflicting on him, and when they prepared a mixture of myrrh and wine to blunt his feeling—to deaden his sensibilities to the amount of anguish that was lingering over his frame; but he would not taste it, lest it should blunt his soul's keen agony; he would not taste a drop, lest it should have dimmed for an instant his sense of the anguish he was to endure.

I have thus endeavored to notice the love which Christ has to his Church. I might now take another course to bring out the same conclusion; and that is, by noticing the object for which all this was bestowed on mankind. "Christ loved

the Church, and gave himself for it;" and here are the effects—here are the sequences—here are the results: "that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the water of his word, that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Beautiful words, demanding a whole discourse in itself; from which we learn that the great principle which Jesus Christ in his love had in view concerning us is our *holiness.* There is a mistake made by many Christian people in the estimate they form of the two great cardinal blessings of salvation, namely, justification and sanctification, I do not mean as to *the order of time*—justification is generally admitted by all to be first in the order of time; but I find this mistake, that not only is justification generally considered first in the order of time, but first in the order of *importance*—to be first in rank—to be first in consequence—to be first in moment and in value. Hence many people seem to value sanctification, not for its own extrinsic worth, but merely as an effect of justification, and therefore an evidence of it to others, as a sign and a pledge of justification, as it is to themselves a proof of justification. Justification is one end for which Christ gave himself for our sins, that believing in that atonement we might have justification; but he gave himself primarily, mainly, that we might have *sanctification;* that he might take the poor, polluted, trembling thing lying in the dust, and tearing the

brand of condemnation from its brow, and washing away the pollution from its nature, that he might put on her—his espoused bride, his celestial queen—the sponsal diadem; that he might take this degraded, trembling woman, lying in the dust, covered with pollution, and lift her up, and make her stand at his right hand as queen in the gold of Ophir: and must she not be brought in the sponsal robe? Unquestionably, looking at the state of the Church as we now find it in its militant condition, we do not find it without spot, or without wrinkle, or without any such thing; but the Church in its militant condition is moving onward and upward; and the individual members who, taken collectively, form the Church, are increasing in holiness and in conformity to God; and every separate soul as it passes that dark bourne which separates eternity from time, having followed after this holiness, and having followed on to know the Lord, every separate soul emerges on the other side of the flood, the body of sin and death having been left on this side—emerges on the other, a pure and spotless thing: and when the whole are gathered together—when the Church of Christ shall be complete in the last degree, when the palace of the bridegroom shall be fraught with celestial splendor and ring with celestial music, then the Church shall be "without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." Ages shall write no wrinkle on her queenly brow; temptation shall cast no defilement on her robes: she is unsullied, immaculate, complete in the image of her bridegroom. When God

calls the universe to celebrate the nuptials of the Lamb, as we read in the book of Revelation, "I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." O, I wonder not that the Church of old, the mystic spouse of the bridegroom, should borrow the splendid eulogy on love which we have in the Old Testament; I stand amazed not that the bursting eloquence of the Church should deck out the love of Christ in this way: "Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death: jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it." O, what has tried to quench the love of Christ! O, the torrents, the floods, that poured their might on this bursting flame of love! But it burned on and on in the seas that inclosed it; and from the tempestuous ordeal to which it was subjected, it came forth an orb of transcendent splendor.

The sacramental service follows this, and the sacramental service is an earnest of the bridal festivity. The bridegroom comes down and meets the bride *now:* he is the master of the feast. It is, so far as it goes, a bridal festivity between Christ and his Church, and I pray God that when the master shall look in on the guests, when those who

are at the table shall receive the elements from the minister, I pray God that he may find no one at it without a wedding garment. Remember what the Bible says about the guest which came in without a wedding garment: the King came in to see the guests, and he saw one who was without the wedding garment; and he said, "Friend," —for in that sense even then he called the Jews friends—"Friend, how camest thou in without a wedding garment,"—without a preparation? And he was speechless; and he was thrust out into the outer darkness—remember *within* was the festive splendor—he was thrust out where the storm raged—where the hurricane blew—where the noise of the storm was only broken by the groan of his own despair. Prepare to meet the bridegroom: "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him."

# XII.

## THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

"Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."—Acts ii, 22, 23.

If there be joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth, what must be the joy of that minister who on good grounds has reason to conclude, that by the instrumentality of his ministrations the kingdom of heaven has been opened to a multitude of perishing sinners? That joy of all joys is the highest, the deepest, the richest, and the strongest. Such was Peter's joy upon the day of Pentecost.

He who enters on the work of the ministry enters into tribulation. When Peter was appointed to the ministry, to the apostleship, he was appointed to martyrdom. He that said to Peter, "Feed my sheep, feed my lambs," said also unto him, "When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not." Peter's ministration was a scene of glory, but it was a scene of

tribulation; it was contested all along its course with the fiercest and the most virulent opposition; but God gave him to taste at its outset the sweetest joy that a minister can taste, and so prepared him for the bitternesses that were to come.

The first sermon, the very first sermon, that Peter preached was with the Holy Ghost and with power. My text is a part of it. You know the simplicity of his manner, the order and power of his argument, the force and majesty of his eloquence, and O, how successful was that first sermon! Peter brought home to his hearers the guilt which they had contracted; he set before them Jesus Christ crucified *by* them, ah! and *for* them as well as by them; and that sermon at once captivated three thousand hearts—three thousand were pricked to the heart, believed, and were added unto the Lord. Our God is in the heavens, and still our Jesus reigns. We that preach in this day are sometimes tempted to inquire, "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" but our God is in the heavens, and still our Jesus reigns, and "with him is the residue of the Spirit." May he pour it out on this congregation! May the arm of the Lord our God be made bare among us to-night! I bring you no new Gospel; I rejoice that I preach to those, mainly so at least, this evening, who have been accustomed to the burden of my ministry, and who know that I have nothing else to preach but Jesus Christ, and him crucified. "Hear these words, then, ye men of Israel," and

be thankful that ye have to hear them, not in hell, but on earth where the Gospel is preached. "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs," said Peter unto the people to whom he preached, "which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."

Now, there are FOUR inquiries to which I shall endeavor to direct your attention from these words. *First*, Who was delivered? "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God." *Secondly*, To what was he delivered? Crucifixion! "Ye crucified him." *Thirdly*, By whom was he thus delivered? "By the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and by your wicked hands and hearts." *Fourthly and lastly*, The design on account of, and the end for which, Jesus of Nazareth was delivered: "for us men and for our salvation." May God the Holy Spirit assist me to preach, and you to hear!

I. WHO WAS DELIVERED? Jesus of Nazareth.

Jesus of Nazareth had at once a name of ignominy, and a name of renown; a name of scandal, and a name of glory. Jesus of Nazareth, or as it is in the original, *Jesus the Nazarene*—called a Nazarene in Scripture because he was devoted unto God—called a Nazarene by the Jews because he was brought up at Nazareth; and they availed themselves of that fact in his earliest history, to

fasten upon him what they thought would be an indelible stigma. "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus is a name of glory. It was, indeed, a human name, a common name: it was borne by many, as we read in history, before it was applied to him who was born of a virgin; but when it was once put on him who was born of the virgin in Bethlehem, it never was put on any other. But the name of Jesus, which had been a human name, a common name, before it was put upon him born of a virgin, when once it was put upon him became a divine name, a superhuman name, and no father dares to call his son Jesus, because God has called his Son Jesus.

> "This is the name to sinners dear,
> This is the name to sinners given."

This is a name above every name, Jesus of Nazareth; he saves us by the power of his cross, by the glory of his throne.

We observe, that the particular feature of his character here developed in the text, is the power of working miracles. "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by *miracles and wonders and signs.*" Now these three words, "miracles and wonders and signs," are synonymous, the import of them is the same, substantially the same. He wrought miracles. What is a miracle? A miracle has been defined—"a suspension of the power of the laws of nature; a suspension or counteraction of the laws of nature." And what are the laws of nature? The laws of nature

are the associations and agencies of God, by which he employs certain causes to the production of certain effects, and not others—a certain association between definite causes and definite effects—what our philosophers call "the laws of nature;" what the Bible calls "the ordinances of heaven." What philosophers signify by the terms, the essential, the inflexible, eternal laws of nature, is nothing at all but the will of God acting in a definite way; and these laws of nature, these ordinances of heaven, this fixed association between cause and effect—Jesus of Nazareth broke in upon, disturbed them when he pleased, set them aside as often as he listed. He showed that he was the Author of nature, and that all these laws, which philosophers call the laws of nature, were of his own making, his own ordination; and, therefore, as he produced the effects without their appropriate causes, as he produced results apart from the usual associated causes, therefore he was the God of nature; and, by his power of working miracles, proved that he was God over all. His miracles are called *wonders*, because they filled the spectators with wonder; and they are called *signs*, because they were indexes of the properties, and prerogatives, and character of him that wrought them.

"Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, *as ye yourselves also know*." Yes, he might very well say that he was preaching to a people who had

seen Jesus raise the dead—who had seen him walk upon the Lake of Genesareth—who had seen him multiply a handful of bread, so that thousands were fed—they had seen him give sight to a man born blind. How did he effect it? Why, he spat upon the ground, made clay with the spittle, and anointed the eyes of the man born blind. Was that likely to make a blind man see? Was that the way to open the eyes of a man born blind, to besmear the eyeballs over in that way? Why did our Saviour do it in that manner? It was done to teach those who witnessed the miracle, that the thing itself did not follow from the physical means employed, for there was no connection whatever between besmearing the blind man's eyes over in that way and his reception of sight. It was to show that the thing wrought was solely the effect of him that wrought it, and not in any wise connected with the physical means employed at the time of the production. The miracle excited their attention, as well it might. It was examined; it was tested; the scribes, and Pharisees, and priests, tossed it from crucible to crucible; they endeavored to find some flaw in it; but after all their long attempts to detect some fallacy, in effect they said, "We will give it up; we cannot deny it; it is unquestionable that a notable miracle has been wrought by the man."

His power of working miracles was further displayed in the resurrection of the dead, as we have already noticed. He raised the son of the widow at Nain, he raised the daughter of Jairus, he raised

Lazarus. Had he only raised up the daughter of Jairus, our infidels would have said it was not a resurrection, it was merely a case of suspended animation. Well, but, besides that, he raised the son of the widow of Nain, who had been dead some days. And that is not all: he raised Lazarus, who was dead and buried, and not only dead and buried, but the process of putrefaction had commenced on the solids and fluids of the body. In that hot country putrefaction took place in three days: and, as I stated when I preached to you last, one proof of the truth of Scripture is the resurrection of Christ. It was prophesied of Christ that God should not leave his soul in hell, and Christ was not more than three days in the grave, because if he had been he would have seen corruption. But Lazarus was more than three days in the grave; for, when he opened up the wondrous scene about to be exhibited the sister of Lazarus said, "Lord, by this time he stinketh, for he hath been dead four days." But what was that to the Son of God? He came to the mouth of the grave and said, "Lazarus, come forth;" and Lazarus started into life. It was Jesus of Nazareth that spake the word, and he was mighty in signs and in deeds.

See his power in feeding the hungry out of a single handful of bread, which he multiplied; see him walking on the waters as if a pavement of adamant were under his feet. These are some of the miracles, and signs, and wonders done by Jesus of Nazareth in the midst of the people; and

these attested his own character as the Messiah. The prophecies that went before him intimated that he should perform miracles; and, performing such miracles, they also attested his own character, his infinite beneficence, and benevolence. I pass on to notice,

II. To what this Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God, by these miracles, signs, and wonders, was delivered: for the apostle says, "Him being delivered."

Here we may ask, Why is it that Peter, who is in general so bold and perspicuous, does not mention to what circumstances, or to what condition, Jesus of Nazareth was delivered? But we shall find an answer to this by a reference to the idiom of Peter's mother tongue. Peter was a Jew, and spoke the Hebrew language; and according to the idiom of that language, the word rendered *to be delivered*, means to be delivered to death, to be delivered up for God, to be delivered to martyrdom. It was a common proverb among the Jews that such a one was delivered—that is, delivered to death, delivered to martyrdom for the truth. Jesus of Nazareth was delivered to death, to a death the most extraordinary in its nature, and the most dolorous in its circumstances, if you consider the place where he died, the persons among whom he died, or the death itself which he endured.

Consider *the place where he died.* We all hope to die in our own houses, in our own beds; the people of God generally are allowed to die thus. But where did your Lord and Master die? One

of the historians says, with inimitable and overwhelming emphasis, "They led him away to Calvary, and there they crucified him." A place putrid with blood and bones—a place, the atmosphere of which was impregnated with a blasphemous breath. Consider, too, *among whom he died.* He was crucified between two thieves, two malefactors; he had the middle place assigned him, as though he was worse than either of them. And, *as to the death itself which he endured*, you know what it was. Crucifixion was the most lingering and painful mode of death, and it was the most infamous one; and in the estimation of the Jews, it was an accursed death, for, according to their own law, "Cursed was he that hangeth on a tree." There see the head that was filled with treasures of knowledge sinking lifeless upon his bosom; see those hands that mixed the ointment for the eyes of the blind, that multiplied the loaves for the starving people, that were stretched out upon the sick and dying, to recover and to serve them; see those hands stretched on the accursed tree; see those feet that were bedewed with the tears and anointed with the ointment of Mary, and that carried him about on his journeys of pity and charity, pierced with rugged iron; and the heart that throbbed with love for the human race, and glowed with zeal for the honor of his Father, pierced with the cruel spear. "Behold, all ye that pass by, and see if ever was sorrow like unto his sorrow in the day that the Lord afflicted him in the fierceness of his anger." What part of his flesh was exempt from

suffering? He bore our sins in his own body on the tree. What part of his body was exempt from anguish? Was it his hands and his feet?—they were pierced with nails. Was it his temples?—they were punctured with thorns. Was it his back?—that was lacerated with scourges. Was it his side?—that was broken by the hostile spear. Was it his bones?—they were all as it were out of joint. Was it his muscles?—they were stretched upon the gibbet. Was it his veins?—they were deprived of their purple fluid. Was it his nerves, those canals of feeling, those rivers of sensation?—they were wrung with anguish. He bore our sins in his own body on the tree. And all this, the affliction of his body, was as nothing compared with the sorrows of his soul. "My soul," said he, when he was delivered up, "is exceeding sorrowful." "Now am I sorrowful," said he, as if he never knew what sorrow was before. Though he had been a man of sorrows and a child of grief, and began when he was the babe of Bethlehem to know the sorrows, though dear to him on our account, yet, when he came to be delivered up, he said, "Now, *now* is my soul exceeding sorrowful." The weight of mental anguish may be alleviated by two sources: it may be alleviated by the affectionate sympathy of relatives and friends, or alleviated by the consolations of God our heavenly Father.

The weight of mental anguish, I say, may be alleviated by the sympathies of *affectionate friends.* When you die, I dare say, your friends will be

with you, and they will shake the pillow under your head, and they will wipe away the cold, clammy sweat as it forms on your marble brow, and they will quote the precious promises, and will pour out the fervent prayer, and they will soothe your anguish, and render you a thousand nameless offices of tenderness and affection. But how was it with your Saviour? When he died his disciples forsook him and fled; he was surrounded with grim guards—by hostile bands.

The weight of our mental anguish is often alleviated, too, *by the ministry of holy angels.* We see not their lovely forms, we hear not the melody of their voices; but they are with us in the hour of our deepest sorrow, and they perform offices of affectionate kindness to us in the moment of our dissolution. They are ministering spirits sent forth to minister unto them who are heirs of salvation; and perhaps the most important part of their ministration is rendered to us just when life is quivering on the lip, and the immortal spirit is on the confines of eternity. Our Saviour had himself, during his life, been ministered to by angels; but, when delivered up to death, the angels afforded him no sympathy. O thou blessed seraph—thou that didst fly to him when in the wilderness of temptation; thou that didst appear to strengthen him when in the garden of Gethsemane—where wert thou when he was upon the cross of Calvary? He drank the wine-press of his Father's fury alone; with him was none; neither man nor angel could sympathize with him in his suffering.

The weight of mental anguish may be alleviated by *the consolations of our heavenly Father.* But Jesus of Nazareth when delivered up to death was without these consolations also. The Father that had honored his birth by a new star—the Father that had honored his baptism by the sound of a more than mortal voice from the exellent glory—the Father that had honored him when he performed the miracles to which I have alluded—the Father, the God of all consolation, the everlasting Father, the God of love—forsook him upon the cross. "My God, [we hear no complaint from him until this, and then Christ said,] my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And, at the sound of his voice and the bowing of his head, nature, affrighted, threw herself into convulsions, the sun hid his face, the rocks rent, the graves opened, the dead came forth. Jesus of Nazareth was delivered up to death, a death the most extraordinary in its nature, and the most dolorous in its circumstances.

III. I inquire, By whom was he delivered up to this death? And the text leads our attention to two classes of agents that were concerned in this act, the one human, the other divine; the one guilty, the other holy; the one visible, the other invisible.

I notice first the *human* agents: "Ye men of Israel," said the apostle, "hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: him, being delivered by the determi-

nate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Yes, it was the Jews that did it; their high priest had said it was expedient for Christ to die; it was their Pontius Pilate that condemned him; it was their Judas that betrayed him; it was their Herod that mocked him; it was their priests that plotted it; it was their scribes and Pharisees that hailed it; it was their populace that shouted for it. But let not the Jews imagine that their guilt is at all diminished by the fact of the death of Christ being "according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God;" "him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." Their actions were not at all influenced by the determinate counsel of Jehovah; the apostle tells them that they were not: he says, "Ye have done it; him ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." O, ye detestable ye infuriated people; what could move you to tear, and mar, and taunt, and crucify, and revile, and slay the Lord of life and glory? He healed your sick, cleansed your lepers, gave sight to the blind, expelled demons from the possessed, he raised your dead—for which of these things do ye crucify him? O Jerusalem, he ennobled you by his birth, he distinguished you by his miracles, he enlightened you by his doctrines, he cherished thee with such affectionate regard, that his eyes became fountains of tears. Here is an appeal by the mouth of the divine Father: "O, my people, testify to me what have I done to thee? wherein have I

wearied thee? I brought thee from the house of bondage with my great might; I made a way through the Red Sea, dried it up for the soles of thy feet; I cast out thy enemies before thee; I gave thee manna from the clouds; I conducted thee by a pillar of fire and cloud; I brought thee triumphantly forth into the land of Canaan; I gave thee houses to live in which thou buildest not, and wells to drink of which thou diggest not, and fields which thou sowest not; I gave to thee David and Solomon for kings; I raised up judges among you; I gave you Moses for a prophet, Aaron for a priest, and Miriam for a prophetess—these things have I done. Why do ye crucify me—which of all these things forms the matter of my accusation?" O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, mayest thou not have been satisfied with having shed the blood of all the righteous men that have ever been slain, from the death of Zacharias, between the porch and the altar, without imbruing thy murderous hands in the blood of the Lord of life and glory? O, ye murderous, infuriated Jerusalem, ye have taken Jesus of Nazareth, and him by wicked hands have ye crucified and slain!

But there is another agency in this transaction; *a God* appears in this amazing scene. Lift up the eyes of your mind to the throne of the heavens, to the Majesty on high, and see God delivering up his Son to this accursed death. "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowl-

edge of God, ye have taken." They could have had no power at all against the Son of man except it had been given to them from above; they could not any of them—neither Herod, nor Judas, nor Pontius Pilate, nor the priests—none of them could have had any power at all if it had not been from God, if it had not been with the concurrence of the Lord, Jehovah himself; "him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God."

The death of Christ was not casual, it was not accidental; it was according to the certain councils entered into between the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in the abyss of a past eternity; when as yet there was darkness, when as yet there was no creatures to be redeemed; when as yet time had not begun to reign. In these councils that were held between the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, it was agreed that one of the persons of the Trinity should become incarnate for lost human nature; that one should die for our guilty world. According to these councils, to the contract formed and entered into, Jesus of Nazareth was delivered up unto death. See Jehovah deliberating whether his own Son or man he should spare. To what will you compare this, and whereunto will you liken it? I know nothing that this transaction on the part of JEHOVAH can be compared unto. I know that Abraham's offering up Isaac is appealed to as something like it; but for my part, I can hardly find a shadow of resemblance between the one transaction and the other Abraham had his

son a gift from God, God had his Son by ineffable generation. Abraham owed every thing he had to God; God owed us nothing. Abraham could not have kept Isaac back from God; but not all heaven, nor earth, nor hell, could have ravished God's eternal Son from his Father's bosom. Abraham, in offering up Isaac, performed an act of obedience as well as of high and generous affection; but God owed nothing unto us. Whereunto, then, will ye liken these doings of the Lord God, and to what will you compare them? See JEHOVAH in his ancient council deliberating with his Son about the future redemption of a future world, and deliberating whether his own Son or man he should spare—his own Son, innocent and holy; man, polluted and guilty: his own Son, the brightness of his own glory; man, the image of the devil: his own Son, the express image of the Father's person, beloved of all heaven; man, an atom of the dust, a child of earth, an heir of hell, covered over with the smoke of the bottomless pit, besmeared all over with the leprosy of abominable crimes:—see Jehovah deliberating whether his own Son or man he should spare. How wondrous it is! How amazing that such deliberations should be followed by such results! Hear the declaration of the apostle on the subject; hear the oracles of God telling us the result of the whole deliberation: "He spared not his only Son, but freely gave him up for us all." O, amazing act of generosity! of noble interference! of high, unutterable love! In fact, we have no language at all to express it; the mind of an angel,

as well as the mind of man, is overwhelmed and confounded; we must all sit down together in the attitude of little children; we can only proclaim, "O, the depths, the heights, of the knowledge of God—they are past finding out!" "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands crucified and slain."

IV. Although we have no line wherewith we can fathom this mystery, wherewith we can reach the depths—no means of ascertaining the height, and breadth, and length of this profound mystery—we find no difficulty to see the design of it. This is the last point, THE DESIGN AND THE END ON ACCOUNT OF AND FOR WHICH JESUS OF NAZARETH WAS DELIVERED UP TO THIS DEATH—A DEATH SO EXTRAORDINARY IN ITS NATURE, AND SO DOLOROUS IN ITS CIRCUMSTANCES.

He was delivered up for what? for whom? Not for his own iniquity, for he had none; not for himself, for he was no transgressor. He was conceived and born in all the beauties of holiness. From the manger to the cross he was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. He could challenge the bitterest of his enemies and say, "Which of you convinces me of sin?" And the very circumstances attendant on his death illustrated and proclaimed the fact of the innocency of his life. Pontius Pilate, the judge that presided, called for water and said, "I will have nothing to do with this innocent man: I am clear." The wife of the judge had a dream about the matter, and so did

the dream lie upon her spirit, that, unusual as it was to send any message to a judge on the bench, she sent to him on the bench, and said, "Have thou nothing to do with the blood of this man." Judas, the traitor that had betrayed him, that had bartered him away for thirty pieces of silver, ran in among the chief priests in a frenzy, flung down the money, and said, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood." The thief upon the cross said, "This man hath done nothing amiss." The centurion, with his hundred of soldiers planted around the cross to make certain of the fulfillment of the sentence, said first, to the honor of his *humanity,* "This was a righteous man!" and then exclaimed, to the honor of his *divinity*, "Truly this righteous man was the Son of God!" And thus wisdom is justified, not only of her children, but by her enemies also. The very things that were intended to tarnish his innocence were the means of eliciting and establishing it; and that not before half of the people, but when all the people were gathered together, from Dan to Beersheba. So true it is, that he was delivered not for his own iniquity—for he never had any.

Now, we are only acquainted with the iniquity of angels and men—with the iniquity of fallen angels, and the iniquity of our own species—and the question is narrowed to this: If Jesus were not delivered for his own iniquity—having none at all—(it comes to this) he was delivered for the iniquity either of angels that sinned, or for our iniquity. Now, then, for which of the two was it? Was it

for the iniquity of the angels? He passed by the angels; he took not hold of their nature: he never was found in fashion as an angel. O, I love the angels! and I will tell you why I love them: among a thousand other reasons, I love them for this—that they do not envy man the grandeur and glory of his being redeemed by the Son of God, while that part of their own species that sank into rebellion, went away from God, was not taken hold of by the purposes of JEHOVAH, was not taken hold of by the Son of God. When Jesus of Nazareth was born the angels sang. What did they sing? What did they shout over the plain of Bethlehem? "Glory to God in the highest, and in *hell* peace?" No; and because they could not sing, "in hell peace," did they refuse to sing, "on *earth* peace?" They could not say, and they did not say, "good will to devils, to our lost brethren;" but they could say, and they did say, "Good will to man." Jesus of Nazareth was "delivered for our offenses, and was raised for our justification." He took hold of our nature; "the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." Jesus Christ, the just, delivered himself up for us the unjust, that he might bring us to God. He saw human nature sinking, falling, plunging into ruin, total and eternal ruin, and he felt for us. Why he felt for us rather than for angels that sinned, do not ask me; I know nothing about it; I can tell you nothing about the matter. It is enough for me to know that he loves me, and loves you, and loves all our apostate race. It is the

grandeur of the Gospel, it is our Gospel, that Jesus of Nazareth loved the human race. In spite of its sinking, he came after it, and caught it, and snatched it, and lifted it out of the ruin that was inclosing it in, and gave it back to God. "He died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God."

Well, then, here comes in the old, withered, good-for-nothing objection of the Socinians, who are fain to tell us that this is a very strange procedure—this is a most unaccountable thing—to say that Jesus, the innocent and holy, should suffer for the guilty and unholy. They tell us it is an unjust thing that the innocent should suffer and atone for the guilty. But, then, I ask them, Why did he suffer, for what did he suffer, if it was not to atone for the guilty? There was some end to be answered by the sufferings of the cross. When a holy being, so distinguished, endured such suffering, there must have been some end in view. Why, then, I ask, did he suffer? O, they say, he suffered to give us an example of suffering, to give us an example of magnanimity, to give us a model of patience under suffering. And they talk about justice! They bring an accusation of forming a monstrous doctrine when I say, Jesus Christ died to atone for a guilty world, while they say he died for a reason not a millionth part so good! If there is injustice in his dying to save a world from the curse of God, there is a million times more monstrous injustice in his dying merely to teach us how to suffer. He died by his own consent. He was delivered up, the text indeed says, by the determinate counsel of

God, and by the wicked hands, or hearts, of the Jews; but he was delivered up as much by his own will, by his own consent, as he was either by the determinate counsel of the Father, or the wicked hands and hearts of the Jews. O, what a lovely victim is Christ—not unwillingly dragged to the altar! not unwillingly pressed upon the altar! O, no! What bound him to the cross? Was it the nails? If he had never been fastened by any thing but nails, he had never been fastened at all. It was love that carried him to the cross; it was love that bound him to the cross: it was love to us that led him to go to the high altar; and it was love to us that fastened him to that altar.

O, for this love of Christ—this love of God! There it is! I am fast; you must ask me no more. If you ask me why Jesus died for you, I can only say, Because he loved you. If you ask me why he loved you rather than the angels, I can give no answer at all. I am lost in an ocean of love! I can go no lower; I do not want to go higher or deeper. It is LOVE.

> O, for this love let rocks and hills
> Their lasting silence break!
> And all harmonious human tongues
> The Saviour's praises speak."

I am anxious, before I close the subject, to have the matter brought home to your consciences, and to know how you stand affected to this great subject; to know whether or not you have believed on this Saviour, and partaken of this salvation. It is not enough to hear of this crucifixion, and the

love that prompted it: there must be a personal appropriation of the benefit of the death of Christ; and the blood that was poured out on Mount Calvary—the blood that was shed there—must be poured out on our hearts—must be applied here; the blood that was shed eighteen hundred years ago must be sprinkled on our hearts now, to-night, this hour, this moment. "His blood be on you and on your children!" May it be sprinkled on all, to wash away your sins, to justify your persons, to sanctify your natures. O, if the blood of the Lamb shall be found upon you at your dying day, at the day of judgment, happy are ye; "happy the people that are in such a case!" You remember reading of the case of the children of Israel, of the sprinkling of the blood of the paschal lamb upon the door-posts of the houses in Egypt. Why was that blood sprinkled on the door-posts? You say it was to distinguish the houses of the Israelites from the houses of the Egyptians. What! could not the omniscience of JEHOVAH distinguish between the houses of Israel and the houses of Egypt without a visible mark being upon the doors of one class, to identify them? As I take it, the true, the grand reason, why the blood of the paschal lamb was sprinkled on the door-posts of the houses of Israel was to teach you, and your children, and your children's children, to the latest generation of those that shall accompany you to the throne of God, that the atonement of Christ must be applied by faith—that the blood shed must be sprinkled. It was not enough that the passover was killed, that

the blood of the lamb was poured out—but it must be applied; and as the blood was sprinkled on the door-posts, so the blood of the atoning Lamb must be applied to us by faith.

For my part, I see no reason why the application should not take place this instant. I feel assured that as to many it has taken place already; but I fear as to some, I fear as to several, the application has not yet taken place; and if you die before it occurs it had been better for you never to have been born. And why do you not look for the application to be made just now? You very likely will admit, with the preacher, that the application must take place some time or other, some how or other, before you die; but then you have a strange way of setting about the matter. At present you think, some how or other, in some indefinable and mysterious manner, the thing is to take place; I tell you it is to take place by the application of the truth of the Gospel, and I know no time and no occasion so likely for the application to take place as when you are hearing the Gospel in which the truth is revealed—as when you are in the house of God, on the day of God. You are at the pool-side, but I want you to get into the pool. It was quite mournful, it was quite melancholy, to hear the story of the man lying at the pool all those years. You are here; get into the pool. You must not be at it merely, but must step in. May the angel trouble the waters, that you may wash and be made whole! May you believe and be saved, believe and live forever! Amen and Amen.

## XIII.

### THE GLORIOUS PURSUIT AND SUBLIME DESTINY OF THE CHRISTIAN.

"Seek those things that are above."—COLOSSIANS iii, 1.

WHILE irrational creatures, by the constitution of their nature, are concerned only for the present moment, it is incumbent on man to consider his relationship to a future world, and to prepare for and anticipate its enjoyments, as being those only which are adapted to his wide-ranging capacity and interminable existence.

The reality of a future and superior state has been clearly revealed to us—not to supply matter and occasion of curious and idle speculation, but to influence our conduct and affections, our life and conversation; to throw a sacred and immortal radiance over the present scene of our being, through which men too generally pass without thought, and from which they retire without hope.

It is recorded of Socrates, that he brought men down from heaven to earth; that is, he drew the attention of men from the study and contemplation of heavenly bodies, to the consideration of the nature and end of man, the duties and relations of men in this life. Socrates, therefore, was said to have brought down philosophy from heaven to earth. But of Jesus Christ it may be said, that he brings us from earth to heaven; he teaches us a

divine philosophy; raises man from things seen, and temporal, and earthly, to things spiritual, heavenly, and eternal. He hath entered the heavenly places, and we are invited and entreated to follow. There is no subject to which the Scriptures more frequently solicit our attention than this. They constantly stamp this life with importance, by calling upon us to consider its relationship to that state of rest and blessedness in heaven which is the ultimate design of the Almighty concerning his rational offspring—a state in which the human mind will be carried to the highest pitch of improvement, and in which all the might of the human faculties, thus improved, will find appropriate and delightful exercise. How fitted is the revelation of such a state to awaken the attention and enkindle the desire of every living thing that is heir to immortality! And how effectually were the first Christians encouraged by it to endure all that trial of cruel mocking and scourging, bonds and imprisonment, tortures and death, to which they were called for righteousness' sake! And what will so detach our hearts from the low and sordid vanities of earth; what will so guard us from its intoxicating and polluting pleasures; what will so sustain and exhilarate us amid its keen and varied sorrows; and, in short, what will so enable us to possess our souls in patience under all that we have to do, and all that we have to suffer, in this the house of our pilgrimage, as the continual thought, the bright prospect, the well-assured hope, of the glories that are at God's right hand? Hence

the inspired writers are constantly directing our thoughts to heaven; instructing and exhorting us to elevate our affections to the things that are above. Listen to the entreaty of the apostle in the words of the text: "Seek!" With impressive and affectionate solemnity and earnestness he calls upon us to "Seek those things that are above." Our remarks shall turn on

I. The things themselves to which reference is here made;

II. The conduct enjoined in relation to them; and,

III. The motives that should impel us to this conduct.

I. THE SUBLIME OBJECT TO WHICH THE EXHORTATION OF THE APOSTLE RELATES. By "the things above" we understand the future blessedness, perfection, and glory of believers in heaven. In this explanation we are supported by the latter part of the verse and of the sentence in which the words of the text lie. "Seek those things that are above," "where," adds the apostle, "Christ sitteth at the right hand of God." Now, at the *right hand of God*, as the sixteenth Psalm teaches, are transcendent joys and eternal pleasures. "At thy right hand," exclaims the devout prophet, "there is *fullness of joy and pleasures for evermore.*" These, then, are the things above, even those which are at God's right hand—the mighty joys, the august exercises, the transporting pleasures, of an eternal heaven.

Men's views differ concerning future, as they differ on the nature of present happiness, and on

the way and means of attaining that which is future. Some think of it merely as a continuation of being, from which is excluded all pain, and want, and sorrow—a mere negative heaven. Some regard it as consisting in the active and uninterrupted exercise of their present senses and faculties—the full and free indulgence of their present tastes and affinities, inclinations and desires, habits and pursuits: a Mohammedan heaven. Others, stretching somewhat farther, place it in an extension of all their pleasurable faculties, perceptions, and sensibilities, with a vast augmentation of new means of gratification and enjoyment. All our real knowledge of it is gathered from the Scripture; and whatever is not drawn from revelation, or is at variance with its testimony on this subject, is not to be regarded.

Man, by searching, cannot find out God or heaven; by his own penetration and unaided sagacity, he can neither find out what God is, nor where he dwells—neither his true nature, nor the palace in which he unvails his beauty and glory. Life and immortality are brought to light, but only by Jesus Christ in the Gospel. From this source alone we derive all our just and appropriate, all our pure and influential, conceptions on this momentous and lofty theme.

Owing to the thick vail that sin and mortality have spread over our mind, we know, even with the revelation that God has graciously favored us, little in comparison of what is to be known. Such is the darkening, and debasing, and debilita-

ting influence of the clouds and fogs of earth and sense and sin, which now envelope us, that of heaven, its duties and exercises, its felicities and glories, "we know but in part." Besides, so much has not been revealed as to gratify the entire of our curiosity, or satisfy the whole of our anxious wishes and desires in relation to the future and celestial state of man. The fact itself of the heavenly blessedness of saints is abundantly clear; but wherein consists the blessedness? of how many parts is it composed? what various ingredients enter into it? what is its length, and breadth, and height? What mind can fully conceive, what tongue adequately declare? Yet sufficient is made known to answer the merciful purposes of our Father in heaven, and to meet the pressing and affecting necessities of his human offspring, while journeying on through the shadows and wilderness of earth and time: and heaven and eternity themselves must disclose the rest. Yes, happily for us, *enough* may be seen through the interposing clouds to awaken regard, to stimulate attention, to kindle desire, to rouse from our criminal and destructive apathy; enough to throw the stillness of a solemn awe over our minds in the midst of the gayest and busiest scenes of this world, and to start, and quicken, and sustain us in a career of new, and upward, and holy conduct. The eye of faith beholds the land afar off, sees the King in his beauty, and gazes on the glories of the new Jerusalem. How gracious and condescending are many of the aspects in which the Scriptures exhibit the heav-

en of the believer. It is held forth to our view as a *banquet*, where our souls shall be satisfied for evermore: the beauties of Jehovah's face, the mysteries of Divine grace, the riches of redeeming love, communion with God and the Lamb, fellowship with the infinite Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, being the heavenly fullness on which we shall feed. As a *paradise*—a garden of fruits and flowers, on which our spiritual natures and gracious tastes will be regaled through one ever verdant spring and golden summer; a paradise, where lurks no serpent to destroy, and where fruits and flowers shall never fade and droop and die. As an *inheritance*—but then an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, the inheritance of the saints in light. As a *kingdom*—whose immunities, felicities, and glories are splendid and vast, permanent and real; quite overwhelming, indeed, to our present feeble imaginings. As a *country*, over whose wide regions we shall traverse in all the might of our untried faculties, and in all the glow of new and heaven-born energies, discovering and gathering fresh harvests of intelligence, satisfaction, and delight. As a *city*, whose walls are burnished gold, whose pavement is jasper, sardonyx, and onyx; through which flows the river of life; the inhabitants of which hunger no more, thirst no more, sicken no more, weep no more, die no more; a city where there is no need of the sun by day, in which there is no night at all, and of which the Lord God Almighty is the light, and the Lamb

the glory. As a *palace*, where dwells the Lord our righteousness, the King in his beauty displayed—his beauty of holiest love; in the eternal sunshine of whose countenance bask and exult the host that worship at his feet. As a *building*, that has God for its maker, immortality for its walls, and eternity for its day. As a *sanctuary*, where the thrice-holy Divinity, enshrined in our own nature in the person of Immanuel, is worshiped and adored, without a sigh, without an imperfection, and without intermission; where hymns of praise, halleluias of salvation, and hosannas of redemption, uttered by blest voices without number, ever sound before the throne. As a *temple*, bright with the divine glory, filled with the divine presence, streaming with divine beauty, and peopled with shining monuments of divine goodness, mercy, and grace.

In further contemplating the celestial blessedness of believers let us very briefly notice,

1. *The perfection of character we shall exhibit in heaven.*—We shall then, indeed, partake of God's nature; be holy as he is holy, awake up with his likeness, and so be fully satisfied. It is impossible for sin or sinners to enter there. All that *is* above is holy. All that *are* above are holy: the throne is holy; the temple is holy; the services are holy; the inhabitants are holy. There is no imperfection above. In one sense Christians are perfect now, and here they are perfect in kind; but which of all of them is there that does not lament his short-comings, his errors; that does not feel

himself surrounded with manifold infirmities. God's salvation now experienced is a salvation from sin, so that it has not dominion over us. We now have fellowship with the Father and the Son, and therefore walk in the light; and, if faithful to the grace, and light, and means that are imparted, sin not. But still there are many frailties in us, many things in our character, which are positive imperfections; there is much that God has to pity; but in heaven there shall be nothing which God will have to pity: on the contrary, he will admire us—feel perfect complacency and satisfaction in us. We shall be free from wrinkles and spots; have no fadings, or faintings, or blemishes, but shall be without any such thing. In heaven are the spirits of just men *made perfect.* On earth how oft we have to lament the wanderings of our mind, the irregular emotions of our physical frame, the faintness of our desires, the coldness of our love. O! the thought, that I shall "attain,"—that I shall "be perfect,"—that there will be nothing in me unworthy to my God, or unlike my Redeemer, or unsuited to the pavilions of immortal beauty and glory! "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him my new name."

2. *The exercises in which they shall be engaged.* —Ease, it is commonly thought, is necessary to repose—to complete and uninterrupted repose; and heaven itself is imagined by many to be a scene of inactivity, a region of utter quiescency. But

analogy and revelation are against this sentiment. Ease is not real happiness, it is not even an ingredient in happiness. This kind of heaven—one thus characterized and composed — would be death rather than life; it would be exemption from pain rather than positive bliss. Angels, those natives of heaven, those ministers of God's presence, not only know, but *do* his pleasure. And are we not taught to pray that our divine Father's will may be done on earth, even as angels *do* it in heaven? The Scriptures have every-where spoken of the *employments*, as well as of the happiness, of heaven in the most exalted terms. Let us not forget that to act in the service of God, and to communicate good to others, constitutes, according to the Scriptures, one vast and glorious division of celestial blessedness. Both of what we are to be, and what we are to do, many things are said of a highly interesting nature; and from these, when we compare them with diligence and attention, a great multitude of other things deeply interesting may be derived by irresistible inference. For instance, those who obtain immortal life are said, by our Saviour, to be equal or like to angels. This one declaration opens to us a wide field of inquiry and conclusion; and assures us, that whatever angels are or do, or are exhibited as being or doing in the Scriptures, we also shall substantially be or do. But the things which angels do, together with their attributes and circumstances, are, as exhibited to us in the Scriptures, very numerous and very great; and these irresistibly infer others

which are great and numerous also. The number and variety of events which make up our system hardly strike our minds at all, and probably never enter the imagination of most men, even among Christians. Yet if we read the Scriptures with attention, and believe what we read, we must clearly discern that both the number and the variety are immense. The inhabitants of heaven serve God day and night in his temple. The services of those who in this life fill up their duty are certainly very numerous; and are so entirely varied, that no two actions among them all are alike. How multiplied, then, must be the actions involved in a service which night never interrupts; of a mind and a body which are never wearied, and of an existence which knows no end! That they are endlessly varied is unanswerably evident from the consideration that no two beings in the creation and no two events in the providence of God have been found exactly alike. Variety is a standing law of created existence and providential dispensation, and throughout eternity will be the great means of disclosing to the intelligent universe the glorious thoughts and purposes treasured up from everlasting in the omniscient mind. Instead, therefore, of being a tame, dull, monotonous, spiritless existence, immortal life is a state of intense energy, vast design, and vigorous action, in which to know, to love, to do, and to enjoy, will form a combination of dignity, glory, and happiness, transcending every earthly conception. All this, also, will expand, and rise, and improve for ever.

This view may tend to moderate the surprise and the sorrow that seize and possess the common mind at the early deaths of eminent Christians, and zealous and laborious and gifted and successful young ministers. They are snatched away from the most active and important services, and we are apt to think that they are gone into darkness and silence, and have sunk into torpor and inactivity; but could we trace their flight, and discern the lofty and energetic and valuable exercises in which their freed spirits are now occupied in some of the bright fields of eternity, the wide regions of their Maker's universe, and their Redeemer's heaven, our wonder at their departure hence (even when at their best estate, or in the very efflorescence of all their youthful ardor) would moderate; and our grief, free from the bitterness of dissatisfaction, would flow on in a current less deep and powerful. O they are not lost, though their sun has gone down while it is yet day. They have but set, to our apprehension, indeed, prematurely, beneath our horizon, to rise again bright planets in the hemisphere of celestial glory.

3. *The happiness of which they shall participate.* —All the religious experience of earth affords but a faint emblem of the bliss of heaven. The delight that Christians now experience kindles into rapture at the thought of the richer delight that awaits them above. Among the children of God in heaven (all happy) the degree of happiness may vary; for it depends upon the capacity of enjoy-

ment possessed by each, and this again upon improvement of character, and of talent, and of trust, and therefore they who have prepared most for heaven, will be most happy in heaven. Saints in heaven are perfectly happy, because perfectly holy. Here they taste of the streams that flow from the infinite fullness of their Father and their God; there they will have to come to the fountain itself. Here they receive, now and then, a bunch of grapes from the better Canaan; there they will have full and free access to the tree of life that is in the paradise of God. Here they obtain an occasional glimpse through the entanglement of the wilderness, and through the mists and fogs that hang over Jordan, and see the green fields, and the golden harvests, that wave luxuriant and vast on the other side; there they will *possess* the vineyards and well-springs of a perpetual Canaan. Here they are sometimes revived by sweet odors, wafted over from the mountains of spices, that lie on the other side the lions' dens and leopards' haunts, among which they at present pass; there every peril is past, and having entered through the gates into the city, all is peace, triumph, and perfection. Here they have many a troubled, many a stormy, and many a cloudy day; there they shall have everlasting joy and gladness on their heads; and sorrow and sighing, and clouds and shadows, and storms and tempests, having forever fled away, they shall abide under a cloudless sky, in regions of eternal bliss. In this land of their captivity they may hang their harps

upon the willows, and, yielding to the sorrows which fill their hearts, forget to sing the Lord's song; but in that land of accomplished promise and finished hope, their harps shall be ever in their hands, and the high praises of God in their mouths, to fill with their transports of gratitude and joy the palace of their king and their God. If every step here is through a vale of tears, there it is through a land of pure delight. In the house of their Father above they shall hunger no more, nor thirst any more; neither shall the sun light upon them, nor any heat. And if any recollection of former sufferings remain, it will serve only to enhance their enjoyments, and augment their wonder, as they view the intricate mazes through which Divine wisdom conducted them. Our happiness will be made complete by beholding the brightness of the Father's glory, in the vision of which we shall rejoice with joy unspeakable; by the presence of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Yes, *there* we shall see Jesus--shall behold the God-man, our Friend, our Priest, our Sacrifice, our All. Then we shall love in return for all his infinite love; and bless and worship him with a growing adoration, and dilating gratitude, for ever and ever. It will, indeed, be heaven to see our Jesus' face! O the infinitude of our bliss! when we shall see him as he is, and love with a passion like his! O that exquisiteness of joy!—those gusts of pure perennial bliss, which the saints of God will experience in singing praises and songs of deliverance to God and the Lamb,

forever! O what rapture to be engaged in penetrating the mysteries of Providence; in listening to the music of the spheres, and the jubilee of the universe! in gazing with untold ecstasy on the face of God and the Lamb, and deriving from him, who is the sea of light and love, fullness of joy, the pleasures for evermore! "But eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive what God hath laid up for them that love him."

4. *The Friendships we shall share there.*—Man is constituted to be happy in society. Place him in solitude, and however exciting and felicitous are his circumstances in other respects, he will wither and pine away. But above, we shall be with the many that shall come from the east, and west, and north, and south, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The entire heaven of angels, and the whole host of the redeemed, we shall have sweet and improving fellowship with forever! The wise and the good, the great and the pure, the benevolent and active, from every region, will be our companions and associates, with whom we shall live, and love, and know, and obey, through one eternally enduring day. Of all the afflictions to which we are liable, there is none so painful as the death of our friends. And O, what a consoling balm is the doctrine that we shall, in the realms above, be restored to their fellowship. This doctrine is involved in many passages of Scripture: in the account of the last judgment—in the language of David on the occasion

of the death of his infant child by Bathsheba—in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus—in the consolation which our Saviour gives to the penitent sinner on the cross—in the assurance administered by the Apostle Paul to the Thessalonian believers, that they should be his joy and crown of rejoicing in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming—in the same apostle forbidding them to sorrow for such as had fallen asleep as though they had no hope of being united with them, and of being together with the Lord—and in the general use which the sacred writers make of the word *sleep* for death, a simile which would be flagrantly incorrect if our recollections, our friendships and affections, were not renewed in a future state. And in general the same doctrine is taught also through the whole book of the Revelation of St. John. Happy prospect, that exalts friendship into religion! What blest society there will be above!

II. The conduct enjoined in relation to these things. We are told by the apostle that we should *seek them.*

1. This implies or supposes *belief of them.*—Let us attend for a moment to the evidence that proves the actual existence of a future state. Those who have just conceptions of the perfections of God will admit the possibility of it. He who gives us existence on this side of the grave can give it on the other side. He who has bestowed life in time can impart it through all coming eternity.

Numerous considerations indicate a high degree

of probability concerning a future state. Every man has a power of thinking and willing, of desiring and abhorring; feels that he possesses within himself *a soul*, (deathless life,) an active, conscious, immaterial principle or nature. And though this has its present residence in the body, it is perfectly distinct, and essentially different from the clay tabernacle in which it is enshrined, and which is essential to its manifestation in the present life, and therefore its existence will not be involved or implicated in the fall of its tabernacle any more than a sunbeam is crushed by the fall of an old house through which it is passing. The strong desire of immortality, too, is an argument for it. Why should God universally implant a desire he never meant to gratify? This desire shows design. The present mode of Divine government indicates the same. The justice and wisdom of the Governor are covered with dark and impenetrable clouds, if the history of man is merely confined to the present world and closes altogether with time; for vile men here are often exalted, and holy men are depressed. One event often befalls opposite characters. The common consent of mankind is in favor of it. Some kind of belief in a future state, and in some sort of future happiness, is very general. Even in the natural uninformed mind there are strong anticipations of futurity. And the idea of the savage, that after death he goes to some green and blooming island across the deep to dwell with the Great Spirit, appears to be the remains of that intuitive impression originally

stamped on the human mind as an evidence of its immortality. But why do I say that a future state of bliss is *possible?* Why do I dwell on its *probability?* We are not led to this conclusion as a mere matter of reasoning; as an affair of an analogy; as a thing to be inferred; I take up my Bible and say—there is positive certainty of it—a certainty, drawn, not from the fair operations of reason, but from the sure, and strong, and steady lights of revelation. The testimony of God in his Word clears away every doubt concerning it, and opens to us the realities of that eternal kingdom in which he reigns. The Scriptures amply unfold the doctrine of immortality, and show us the throne and judgment-seat of the Eternal; they disclose to us, with awakening and irresistible emphasis and clearness, the mansions of the blessed, and their dread alternative, the prison of the wicked. See this revelation in the Old Testament. Enoch was translated, that he should not see death, and was not found, for God took him. The Hebrew patriarchs desired a better country. The patriarch of Uz knew that in his flesh he should see God. Moses had respect to the recompense of the reward. David believed he should see God's face in righteousness, awake up in his likeness and be satisfied. Daniel declares that they that sleep in the dust shall awake and come forth. Isaiah announces the Jubilee of the dead—the morning of their manumission: "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust." And another Old Testament oracle triumphantly proclaims that "Death is swal-

lowed up in victory." But the *New* Testament abounds in this class of evidence. There, life and immortality are brought to meridian light, and stand confessed most vividly before us. There, indeed, from beginning to end God hath promised eternal life. Matt. v, 8; Luke xii, 32; Matt. xxv. There are things above, then: to seek them, supposes you have a belief of them; that you doubt not their existence, their reality, their certainty.

2. It implies *That attention should be directed toward them.* They must be *minded*, as well as believed. The fact of the vast importance of these things might lead to the conclusion that the duty here enjoined is not likely to be forgotten or neglected. We might imagine that all that was necessary on this subject is just to convince us of the importance of these things, and then leave the mind to its own natural sense of what is due to its interests, in order to secure the proper line of conduct toward the things thus exhibited. But how different all this is from what we know to be the fact. When we call to recollection the early bias which men have taken, and the downward tendency by which they are, since the fall, characterized, it is proper to remind them of the necessity of the course which the apostle calls "looking at the things which are not seen and eternal; seeking the things that are above." You may be exposed to the secularities of life, and unless you indulge and cultivate the upward tendency so emphatically expressed in the text, they will fix you down to the low level of earthly and every day existence.

You must attend to the leading course of thought and inclination by which your mind is characterized. The thoughts must be turned in this lofty direction:—I say *thoughts*, for it must not be thought about heaven now and then merely, with long and frightful intervals between, but toward the things above the attention must be *much* directed. We must feel that religion is the one great and essential article in the great business of life, for although there is time for every thing, you are not to exclude religion from its pre-eminence; you are not to confine it, as a sacred and hidden mystery, but to be seen and meditated on at certain occasional periods, but rather to diffuse it as a coloring through all the substance of life. It is true, that household occupations must be attended to; it is true, business, with its manifold requirements, must be regarded; it is true, that health must not be neglected; it is true, that calls upon our daily bread are ever multiplying and must be heeded; and thus the life of man is frittered and broken down. But religion demands not the forgetfulness of our worldly duties; and though it requires the whole man, yet an individual may ply his busy hand through the hours of labor, prosecute his daily employment, relax his feelings amid the enjoyments of the domestic circle, indulge in the prattle of infancy and all the joyousness of an innocent heart, go from one to another in the offices of friendship, yet carry religion with him into all, and no more resign its complexion than that of his face. Whatever be a person's engage-

ments, there will cling to him something of his prevailing temperament, be it sanguine, phlegmatic, or melancholy; so religion should adhere to us in all our actions, since it demands that whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we should do all to the glory of God. Thus the patriarchs sought the things above—of whose piety it is the highest eulogy to say, that "they declared plainly that they *sought* a better country—so fixed was their attention to sacred and heavenly things. Then let us seek them; by a constant and instantaneous religion seek the things that are above. To seek them, must signify also that we are to,

3. *Set our attachment upon them. Set your affections upon things above*, it is added in the verse after the text. The import of this exhortation is, that we are to admire and love them, as well as believe and contemplate them. It may be objected to this view, that the regard which we are now directing to be paid to things future, is inconsistent with the attention which is due to the interests of the present life. It is, however, certain that Christianity enjoins no opposing duties, prescribes no incompatible precepts. While we are commanded to render to God the things that are God's, we are at the same time charged to render unto Cesar the things that are Cesar's. While we are directed to be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, we are instructed also to be diligent in business. Can it be thought that he who is passing through a wilderness, in a state of banishment from the scenes and fellowships which he holds most

dear, should not often think with emotion of the delights, and securities, and sweet societies of a permanent and congenial home?

The history of the Jews when in Babylon, is an illustration of the conduct enjoined in the text. Did they, while living in Babylon surrounded with its absorbing bustle, and engaged in its active business, forget the land of Israel, and disregard it in their hearts? No; their recollection of it was most vivid and affectionate, deep and practical, ardent and constant, and is described in language beautiful, fervid, and impressive. Hear their affecting complaint, Psa. cxxxvii: "*By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows.*" One of these captives is represented as expressing himself in the following words: "*If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy!*" Their hearts, then, were in Jerusalem, though they sojourned in Babylon. The dust and stones of Jerusalem, and the rubbish of its temple and its towers, were dearer to them than all the magnificence and splendor of the greatest capital of the then greatest empire in the world. So should we feel and act in reference to the Jerusalem that is above; the new, the heavenly Jerusalem. To the true believer this world is a desert, dry and barren; and though there may be here and there a spot which seems to present inviting verdure, and to

court his stay, he lingers not, but presses on, for he feels it is not his rest, because it is polluted; and he casts a solicitous look beyond its barren sands, to the land of promise, where are his home, his treasure, and his heart. And his greatest burden of grief is, that the current of his affections should ever be interrupted, or that their fervor should be repressed, for a single moment, by the trifles and vanities of the passing scene. Thus having his heart in heaven, his feet are ever moving thither; for when acting and enduring under the impression and expectation of heaven and heavenly things, his step is firm in the road that leads to things above. And when the affections are not only lifted up to, but *set upon* them, neither the length, nor the toil, nor the difficulty of the way can greatly impede the progress thither.

4. *Diligent and persevering exertions*, in order to obtain them; belief of the things that are above awakens attention to them; attention to those things gives rise to desires after the possession of them; and those desires, in their turn, give birth to exertions, in order to secure the attainment and possession of them. He who knows what the workings of affection toward an object are, knows well that his exertions to secure and attain it are just in proportion to the affection and desire with which he regards it.

Now all that we require in religion is, that you act consistently; that you regard things proposed to you with an attention corresponding to their suitability and importance; and that you exert

yourselves to attain them, with an ardor, and an assiduity, and a perseverance, proportionate to their desirableness and value. Seeking the things above, then, must imply the use of those means which are prescribed in Scripture, and the observance of those ordinances which have been instituted by our Lord and Master as helps on the way to heaven. And what are the means whereby we are to hold fast, and hold out, and hold on, till we obtain them? I answer, faith and prayer, accompanied by the reading of the word of God, and devout meditation thereon, together with a diligent and earnest attention to the institutions of grace and the ordinances of religion. These are the means, the conscientious, diligent, and persevering use of which, followed and crowned with the blessing of God, will lead you through the low vale of humble love to the Paradise that is unfading and eternal. Yes, it is by faith only that we can walk in the way of life and peace—the road that leads to heaven and God. The shield of faith is that alone whereby we are able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked one and to overcome the world. Its influence alone can sanctify the character and purify the heart, and give substance and evidence to things not seen and eternal —the things that are above. And it is only by prayer that faith can be kept alive and active, and become omnipotent, as it was with Moses; to whom what Aaron and Hur were, (holding up his hands when Israel fought against Amalek,) prayer is to faith. And the ordinances of religion stretch

the arms of faith and fan the breath of prayer, and feed and inflame our desires and longings after the heavenly worship. It is in them that our characters receive their best impressions—their holiest influence. Faith will lead you to the ground of all your hope, the spring of all your joys; and prayer, in union with faith, will bring Christ down from heaven to be your staff of dependence and your rod of defense; for of yourselves you can do nothing. Faith will lead you to feed on the bread of God—the manna from above; and prayer will draw around you the atmosphere of heaven, out of which you will derive those influences of grace that shall strengthen and comfort you for the rest of the way. You may have to pass through tribulation, yea, through much tribulation; but it is the way to the kingdom. The farther you advance on the road, the humbler will you become; and the nearer you come to heaven, the more lively will be your apprehensions of the necessity of holiness, and the more strenuous and constant your pursuit of it: "I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

III. SOME MOTIVES OR CONSIDERATIONS WHICH SHOULD IMPEL US TO THIS CONDUCT, especially those which lie in the neighborhood of the text. Be persuaded to it—

1. *From a regard to consistency of conduct.*—

Consistency is that agreement that every part of a man's conduct should have to the character which he sustains and the profession that he makes. Sometimes it may be difficult to be consistent; but generally, from the very harmony that the part we have to perform has with our character and principles, there is a pleasure and satisfaction in its performance; for it holds true, that what symmetry is to the bodily frame, that consistency is to the moral character of an individual. And, whether from some original fitness in the nature of the things themselves, or from some arbitrary associations that take place in the mind, that which is consistent is not hard to be discovered. Even in the representation of ideal character this is studied and attended to; and whenever the laws of association are violently severed and broken, the effect is painful and disappointing. Fiction pleases only so far as it corresponds with real character. Without this consistency there could be no uniformity in the human character; all would be unnatural, disjointed, harsh, injurious, unlovely; one great moral chaos; a sea of things mischievous, monstrous, and offensive. Soldiers running away in battle; judges violating those laws which they were sworn to maintain and defend; a man, distinguished by wisdom and prudence, erudition and sagacity, giving himself up to the most ridiculous, and absurd, and degrading follies; a man bowed down with a multitude of years and their accumulated infirmities, embarking in the most extensive, laborious, and speculative enterprises of worldly

business, are all inconsistencies—they are palpable and monstrous incongruities.

And can it be thought less inconsistent in a disciple of Christ and a child of God to be eagerly grasping after the vanities and fortunes of earth, at the same time that his heart, and his home, and his treasure are professedly in heaven? Thus, in religious character, there is a consistency which is imperative, beautiful, and advantageous. No doubt Christians have many other motives to holy conduct besides that which arises from the desire and the obligation to maintain the consistency of their character; but they do not overlook the all-compelling argument in favor of such conduct, which grows out of their new state and character. "If," says the apostle, "ye be risen with Christ, seek," etc. You who were "dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath God quickened together with Christ." If, then, he argues with irresistible point and force, if ye be thus changed, and are "risen with Christ, *seek*," etc. The distinction between their present and their former state is not a distinction without a difference, but a distinction so great as to be set forth in the Scriptures under images and illustrations of the most decisive and striking nature: they are turned from darkness to light—they have passed from death unto life—they have gone forth out of the pit, and emerged from the dungeon—they are created anew, and born again—in short, "they who are dead in sins are quickened together, and are risen with Christ." From so great a difference

of state, it is expected that the greatest difference of conduct should follow. Every view of the Christian's character given us in the Scriptures shows us the importance and necessity of consistency of conduct. Is he set forth as running a race? then his eye must be upon the prize, and he must press toward the mark of it with all possible diligence and earnestness. Is he held up as a combatant? then he is never to be without his arms, never to sleep upon his post, or to relax in his energies, until all the field is won and proclaimed won. Is he a citizen? then he is to cherish a sense of the advantages, privileges, and immunities of his high destiny, and to walk worthy of his exalted vocation. Is he a member of one vast and holy family? then he must adhere to the principle that animates and actuates the whole, or he will interrupt and disturb its harmony and perfection? Is he in Christ? then he must abide in him, and so bring forth much fruit, that his God and Father may be glorified. In short, is he a child of God, and an heir of glory; is he risen with Christ? then he must seek the things that are above, where Christ sitteth.

What should we think of him that is heir to a great monarchy, collecting and arraying himself in the rags and tatters of a pauper? and yet such conduct would not be as inconsistent as ours is if we prefer earth to heaven. We should consider it as an act of meanness, in one possessed of unbounded affluence, to be collecting every straw, and gathering all the refuse that he could find;

and yet such conduct would not be as inconsistent as ours, who profess to be risen with Christ, is, if we seek the things below, and not the things that are above. And is there any thing in the riches of earth that can for one moment be compared with the things that are above—the riches of a blissful eternity? Is there any thing in the honors of this life that can for a single instant be put in competition with that glory which is to be revealed in the saints? Is there any thing in the pleasures of time that can be balanced with the joys that are at God's right hand—the pleasures in his presence for evermore? Seeing, then, that you look for such things, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation!

2. *On account of the reasonableness of the duty itself, I* would enforce it upon you.

And let me ask, Can there be any thing more reasonable than that, among the multiplicity of things which press upon and court our attention, we should seek those that are most excellent and most enduring? The things that are below—the riches, the pleasures, the honors, the business, the bustle, and whatever else this short enduring world can give—all earthly things are gross and unsatisfactory, hollow and vain, blighted and mildewed, and cannot constitute the felicity of man, being neither suited to the spiritual nature nor to the immortal duration of our souls; they can neither satisfy us while we live, nor preserve us from death, nor accompany us into the other world, nor contribute any thing to our happiness there. And if

they can do nothing toward our real and appropriate felicity, why should we so eagerly seek them; why set our hearts upon them? They that seek for happiness in earthly things are like the women sitting over our Saviour's sepulcher, with their faces bowed down to the earth; they seek the living among the dead: our happiness is not here, it is risen, it is *above*. Let our hearts ascend thither, where our happiness and our treasure are. If the things among which we grovel for the food and light of our imperishable nature had a mouth and a tongue, and could speak to us, they would say, "Why look ye so earnestly on us?" as though we could satisfy your immortal cravings. Are we in God's stead—in Christ's place—in heaven's room? Look not on *us*—we are but things seen and temporal. As well might the chemist look for the philosopher's stone among the dust of the streets, or hope to elaborate the elixir vitæ from the polluted water of a stagnant lake, as we expect to find among the things below the bliss of our undying spirits. God never put it into them: and nothing can be to us more than God intended it. In our pursuit of the things of this world as our chief good, we are following after vanity, hunting a shadow, pursuing a fallacy. And why should we bestow our thoughts, our desires, our longings, and affections, upon these unreal and fallacious, low and mean things, and when there are incomparably better objects to fix them upon?

Besides, the unreasonableness of seeking things beneath will appear still more from their shortness

and transitoriness. The fashion of this world passeth away, but the things which are above abide and endure for ever and ever. Like the *bubble* that is blown, and that when the rays of light fall on it glitters in all the colors of the rainbow, but while we gaze bursts and is no more—like the *gourd*, which casts its cooling shade against the vehement noon-tide heat, but, ere the next day's sun, has utterly withered away—like the *flower*, that blooms and sheds its fragrance in the morning, but in the evening its beauty and its odor are gone—like the *shadow* that flings itself for a moment across our path, and then declineth—like a *vapor* that appeareth and is quickly dissipated, and we see it no more—so rapidly the things that are beneath consume and flee away. O "what shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue!" No! shadows *we* are not, "though shadows we pursue." O let us elevate our thoughts from time to eternity, and transfer our affections from earth to heaven. All below perish in the using; but the things that are above are so lofty and pure, so sublime and godly, so real and true, that the very desire of them gives the mind an elevation, and a strength, and a purity, which in themselves are most improving, most grateful, valuable, and important.

But perhaps it may be objected against the unreasonableness of the course which we are now enjoining, that to require a person in one situation to be continually directing his anticipations and preparations toward another and a future one, is impracticable and absurd. This objection arises either

from ignorance of the nature and influence of religious exercises and pursuits upon man's present and social state, or from willful perversion of the truth. So far is the duty enjoined from being incompatible with a due regard to the just interests and engagements to the present life, that a proper attention to them is secured by religious principles; for it is by a patient continuance in well doing that we are to seek for glory, honor, immortality, eternal life; not by visions and reveries, seclusions, and abstractions; not by an idle and voluptuous sentimentalism.

It is true we have seen the disciples of the Church of Rome thus unfitting and indisposing themselves for the appropriate and necessary avocations and duties and intercourse of social and civil life, under pretense of deeper devotedness and higher sanctity, and of cultivating closer and more uninterrupted communion with things above. But this is the abuse of religion; this is being wise above what is written: it is substituting the traditions of man for the commandments of God.

Here we are educating for futurity, and the use and end of education is to prepare for scenes and situations, for services and engagements that are future and distant. Is it considered unreasonable and improper in a parent to inure his child to the thought of the future—to lead him to anticipate it—to fit and qualify him for acting his part well in it? Surely not. Is it wisdom and kindness in him to discipline and educate his child, and so prepare him for his coming manhood? The parent knows

that his child will not remain a child—that he will outgrow childhood, and stretch into maturity, and he cannot endure the thought that his child is to become a man, and not be *fitted* for manhood. No more is it unreasonable in an expectant of immortality to seek for a preparation for immortality: reason says that the heir of eternity should labor to be made meet for eternity. Dismal thought! to plunge into eternity unfit for it—without any relish for its joys, or capacity for its duties, or title to its rewards. O then be ready for eternity, for it cometh in such an hour as we think not. O let it not surprise you unawares, let it not overwhelm you in a state of unpreparedness. To make preparation for it is the strongest reason, the highest wisdom, the truest philosophy, the deepest science: this is true religion. Hence we are exhorted by the inspired teachers to lay up treasure in heaven, and forbidden to be cumbered and troubled about many things.

We should be prompted to this on account of—

3. *The present advantages which result from it.*

By a wise appointment of God, duty and interest are joined, and as we attend to one so the other will be promoted. Godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come. Religion "is our life" even now. All things work together for good to them that love God. To be engaged in setting our affections on things above is that very exercise which is the best calculated to promote our present welfare and immediate comfort.

For when the thoughts and affections are set on things above, they are placed on their proper object, they are attached to their appropriate center, and the result must be rest of spirit, inward tranquillity, satisfaction, and harmony. So that, independent of our prospects in futurity itself, were we merely to consult our true interests in the present state, we must be induced to obey the direction of the apostle from the singularly happy influence which it exerts on the actual condition of the mind.

While our thoughts and affections are set on the things above, worldly prosperity will not greatly elevate, nor worldly adversity much depress; the one will not intoxicate, the other will not destroy. The Christian's great treasure knows no decay. His most valuable possession is not liable to the contingencies to which all earthly things are subject. He is hastening to an incorruptible inheritance, a kingdom that cannot be moved. And

> "A hope so much divine
> May trials well endure."

You, who know that you have in heaven a better and enduring substance; that are sure of a place at God's right hand—a mansion in the skies—a bower in paradise—a seat in glory—a repose in Abraham's bosom—an asylum, a refuge, a house, a shelter in eternity; you, that are going to the general assembly and Church of the first-born, to the innumerable company of angels, to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to God the Judge of

all; to the general rendezvous of the just, the gathering of the called, the faithful, and the chosen, you can afford a few trials by the way. You can smile at the transient storm, remembering the haven for which you are bound. Your little bark may feel the dash and fury of the storm, but her anchor is cast within the haven, and she will outride the billows and defy their rage. The believer has cast anchor in heaven, and though he may suffer from the storms of life, he cannot be a wreck. You that are trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, may bend before the blast as it whistles and howls around you, but you shall not be broken by it. Let winds blow and tempests roar, they will take away nothing but leaves; the tree is safe, and can neither be shivered nor torn up, being fast rooted by the throne of God; and the fruit it bears is to life eternal. So we hear the pious of every age expressing and solacing themselves amid the fluctuation of surrounding circumstances, and the depression to which it gives rise. David exclaims, "though the mountains," etc. Habakkuk: "Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flocks shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." Paul: "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." All believers may say, "We are cast down,

yet not destroyed—sorrowful, yet always rejoicing —patient in tribulation, yet rejoicing in hope." The Christian can bear the loss of those things that perish in the using, knowing that he has bags which wax not old, riches that never decay, a treasure in the heavens, unfading and eternal.

4. Above all—be entreated to seek the things above, *because they are the scenes in which Christ dwells.* This is the argument with which the apostle enforces the injunction. *There* is Christ in his rest and glory; and where he is will you not seek to be also? And is it not the object of his affectionate solicitude that you may be with him in his glory? Hear that prayer from one whom the Father heareth always, and exult in what you hear: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory." It is the presence of Christ in heaven that will make it so rich a heaven to you, you saved sinner. Have you not enjoyed his presence in some favored seasons on earth, and have not its manifestations been most sweet and exhilarating? If such are the streams, what must be the fountain? If such the glimpses, what will be the full and unclouded gaze? Times of refreshing even now are from the presence of the Lord; what will be the high felicities of his heavenly presence! If communion with him (through media) be so delightful that it supplies our souls with heavenly food, and our seasons of its enjoyment are the bright spots of our journey to the upward house, what must it be to sit at his feet in

glory, to gaze upon that face of his that shineth like the sun in his strength, and to hold intimate and unbroken fellowship with him whose smile irradiates the whole paradise of God? This is all we desire—to be *with the Lord!* this is the summit of our wishes! True, we read of the splendor of the Almighty King—of the golden streets, the jasper pavement, the angel choirs, the swelling chorus of eternity: but this word, "we shall be ever with the Lord, be where Christ sitteth," conveys to us more of heaven than all the metaphorical emblems of it, august and gorgeous, delicious and delirious as they are! It was this that made John, who leaned on the breast of Jesus as he sat at meat, say, (1 John iii, 2,) "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." To Him all heaven in one thanksgiving joins, saying, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive riches, and power, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." And do we not feel solicitous to go up on high, that we too may swell the music of adoration and gratitude which is rendered him there? Surely it is our desire to "behold the Lamb" upon the throne, and to join in that immortal song which ascribes to him that which is so justly his due. Seek the things above, then, *for there Christ sitteth.*

5. Finally, be admonished *by the consideration of the dreadful alternative which must inevitably follow the neglect of this duty.* If you seek them

not, you will be excluded from them forever. If you are not preparing for heaven, you are for hell. If you follow not holiness you cannot see the Lord. If you refuse to seek the things above, you are seeking death in the error of your ways. It is only to those who have given diligence to make their calling and election sure that an entrance can be ministered into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Prepare, then, to meet your God, for if you do not he will meet you as a bear bereaved of her whelps, and will rend the caul of your heart. O then, as you would not lie down in sorrow, nor make your abode in the flames of hell, nor dwell where the howlings and wailings of damnation fill the place with noise more dreadful than ten thousand thunders, nor be fastened upon by a worm that can never be shaken off, nor consumed by a fire that can never be quenched; as you would not be undone and lost forever, O seek, I entreat, I beseech, I conjure you, by all that is delightful in heaven, and by all that is dreadful in hell; by the authority of God your Maker, and by the love of Christ your Redeemer, and by the strivings of the Holy Ghost; by the necessities of your immortal spirit; by the approach of death, and the solemnity of judgment, and the tremendousness of eternity; by all I pray you to seek the things that are above.

In conclusion. I think I may say that I am set free from the necessity of making a stated *application* by the tenor of the discourse itself. I trust, however, that you have made inquisition into the

matter as we have proceeded, testing your characters as the professed disciples of Christ by the views that have been supplied. Examine well the foundation of your hope; ascertain the reality of your resemblance to the mind and character of the Lord Jesus Christ; and particularly see how far your profession and conduct agree—how they answer the one to the other. Since the original publication of Christianity many are the objections against it that have been advanced by its enemies. We have reason and evidence enough to satisfy the inquiries of the philosophical, the argumentative, the learned, and the critical; and not one of those objections which are founded on argument, and learning, and philosophy, and criticism, but has been most satisfactorily and triumphantly answered over and over again. But that which has reference to the subject that has now occupied our attention—the objection which says that Christians are so worldly, so selfish, so avaricious, that there is no difference between them and those that make no profession, and that the former are just as earthly, and as secular, and as feverish as the latter; this objection, I say, is not so easily answered and set aside. Here it is, my brethren, that the Saviour is wounded in the house of his friends. It is difficult to find an answer to this allegation, and I summon you and myself practically to refute it. If we have been thus culpable and injurious, let us be so no more; let us be persuaded, and entreated, and exhorted henceforth to walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of

their minds; but live soberly, righteously, yea, godly in this present world; let us maintain such a walk and conversation as not only shall bring no reproach upon the worthy name whereby we are called, but such as shall prove beneficial and ornamental, influential and useful; let us remember that the cause of Christ is committed to us in the world; its fate and fortunes are in some sort in our hands, and it is for us to uphold and extend it. And O let us see to it that its brightness is not sullied, nor its progress impeded, through our personal inconsistency and impurity; and to this end let us be constantly "looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ."

## XIV.

### RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.

"He said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."—LUKE xvi, 31.

THERE is nothing in which we are more interested than in the character and offices of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was at once our Priest, our King, and our Prophet: and, therefore, he is our Saviour. It is in his prophetical character, however, that he appears before us in the chapter from which I have taken my text. He might well say, "I am the

light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." The instructions which he conveyed, as our prophet, he communicated in various forms, but generally in the form of a parable. In adopting this method of imparting instruction and impression, he accommodated himself to the taste of the age and country in which he lived. It seemed natural, in the eastern part of the world, to think, and speak, and write in figures; there was something in the climate that was particularly favorable to that mode; and what the climate rendered natural, the form of government that generally prevailed in the eastern part of the world rendered highly expedient; for the form of government that generally prevailed in the East was arbitrary and highly despotic; and, therefore, Truth was obliged to shroud herself—she durst not appear naked in the streets, she durst not disclose herself unvailed.

The parabolical method of instruction has a peculiar fascination—it has a charm for every ear. It seizes hold of things natural, and presses them into the service of religious, and moral, and spiritual improvement—it takes the objects with which we are daily conversant, and makes them the vehicles through which lessons of the most valuable kind are communicated to our minds. But, of all the parables which our Saviour ever delivered, the most impressive, if not the most instructive, is that, the concluding sentence of which I have now taken for my text: "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine

linen, and fared sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried, and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed; so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee, therefore, father, that thou wouldst send him to my father's house, for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

In that one parable we have more light thrown on these important and universally-interesting subjects—the government of the world, a retributive providence, the future, and final, and endless destinies of the human race—than is found in all the uninspired writings of men that ever attempted to meddle with subjects so universally commanding in their interests, but at the same time so peculiar to revelation. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

The first general statement suggested by the parable is, touching THE UNEQUAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE GIFTS OF PROVIDENCE AMONG MANKIND. There was a rich man, and there was a poor man. Some men seem born to wealth—they wallow in riches, they roll in elegant carriages, and are surrounded by a gay, and a dazzling, and a magnificent equipage. There is so much splendor around their persons, that, wherever they move, for the moment, the monotony of affairs is broken up, and the stare of the multitude is fastened upon them. How different is it with others? Born under inauspicious circumstances, the sun of prosperity never once shines upon them at all between the cradle and the grave. They pursue their toilsome labors, and earn their bread by the sweat of their brow; the iron hand of indigence presses them down sorely; ten thousand anxieties and pinching cares harass them; their persons are covered with a threadbare garment, and are lodged in a lowly cottage.

"There was a certain rich man," unusually rich, so rich that he "was clothed in purple"—which, in those days, was the vestments of kings and emperors—"and fine linen," the manufacture of which was then exceedingly rare, and the price of which was exceedingly costly. And as it was with his garments, so as to his diet—he "fared sumptuously;" his table was loaded with all the luxuries and delicacies brought from the four quarters of the globe. "He fared sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar," a man so poor that he had not where to lay his head, and therefore he laid it at another man's gate—so destitute that he was dependent on the sweeping of the house of others, who were more favored by the gifts of Providence than himself. "There was a certain beggar, named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores." And to complete the picture, we are told that "the dogs came and licked his sores."

This difference, however, in providential allotments here, does not proceed upon the principle upon which we are apt, at first sight, to conclude that it does. We are not to infer, that, by this arrangement, God is punishing the wicked and honoring and advancing the righteous. That is the impression that is often taken of this matter. It was so with the friends of Job; when they beheld him oppressed with calamities, and smitten from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot with wounds and bruises, they drew the inference that God was thus punishing him for some great

iniquity or other of which he had been guilty. But men's moral state and condition, in the sight of God, is not thus usually indicated by any difference as to their condition among each other.

I know that infidels found on the fact of the inequality that subsists in the affairs of men on earth an argument to bolster up their infidelity. You see, say they, that there is no presiding Genius in the universe—you see there is no over-ruling Power—no God of wisdom, and equity, and goodness—you see that the good man, as you call him, is oppressed and unfortunate, while the wicked, as you term them, are distinguished by wealth and splendor. And thus it is that these men, in their Sadducean principles, make a mockery of a sovereign Providence, and retribute eternity; and they say, let us pluck every rose before it is blown, and every flower before it is withered; "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."

But it is not merely infidels that have thus felt on this subject: the righteous themselves have sometimes been tempted to miscalculate here. David acknowledges, that upon this very subject he had almost stumbled; when he saw the wicked prospering, having plenty in their tabernacles, while he himself was plagued and was all day long in adversity, he was ready to throw away his faith, and join in alliance with the infidel; and he tells us that "his feet had well-nigh slipped." But he went into the sanctuary of his God, and there a flood of light came on this dark and mysterious chapter of the ways of the Most High. We know

that our Father, who is in heaven, makes his sun to rise on the evil and upon the good, and causeth his rain to descend on the unjust as well as upon the just. And when full day shall pour its streaming light on all the footsteps of the Almighty in the deeps, then we shall see that God is true and righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works. This leads me to notice,

*Secondly*, THE DECISIVE ADJUSTMENT OF THINGS THAT TAKES PLACE AFTER DEATH. We have already seen the inequality in life, and now let us notice the adjustment that takes place at death. "And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom." The beggar died; there was no funeral; there is the circumstance of a funeral noticed in the case of the rich man, but there is no record here touching the funeral of the poor man. He was thrown into the nearest Golgotha, among vulgar dust! Here no voice of lamentation was heard—no train of mourners attended, having the appearance of affection toward him. Here was nothing but death, without any thing to shorten its shade or mitigate its frowning aspect. But that body which was thrown away so unceremoniously is precious in the eye of heaven. "Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

All shall come forth from their graves, whether they were good or whether they were bad. The body of Lazarus is safe in the custody of God, and shall be forthcoming on the morning of the resurrection.

But what becomes of his soul? That, we are told, "was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom." "Carried by angels!" How benevolent are these celestial creatures! What an interest they take in the fate and fortunes of mankind! When we were created at first they did not envy us the circumstances of our creation; they congratulated us that we were made in the image and after the likeness of Almighty God. And when we had ruined ourselves, and the Saviour of mankind was born, they did not envy our race that distinction and honor, but came down in tribes, from their abodes above, and celebrated the nativity of the Redeemer of men. How they watched around the footsteps of the man of sorrows while he was in the world! How they ministered to him and guarded him in the wilderness! With what affectionate readiness they rolled away the stone from the mouth of his sepulcher on the morning of his resurrection! And what an interest they take in us individually! When, on their errands of mercy through this our far-off planet, they observe the tear of repentance gathering on the eyeball of a man unwont to such a tear, and witness the sigh of contrition in the bosom unwont to such a feeling; away they speed with the tidings up to the everlasting courts above, and start a new gust of

sensibility among all the hosts of the heavenly world: for we know, on the authority of Him who is at once the king of angels and of men, that there is "joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth."

Who are the angels? "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" And perhaps the most affectionate, if not the most important, part of their ministration unto us, on earth, is at the juncture of our dissolution, when we are separating from time and earth, and all our ancient fellowships are breaking up, and when life is quivering on the lip of the man who says, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith,"—when the heart-strings are breaking, and the soul is disentangling itself from the flesh with which it has been allied, the angels are there to take the departed spirit, and bear it, alive, up to the palace of the King of angels and of men.

Lazarus shared in their ministrations: "It came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels." Where? "Unto Abraham's bosom." This language conveys to our mind the notion of a banquet. At the banquet of the Jews they were in a reclining posture; they did not sit at their meals upright, as we do at ours, but leaned at them; and therefore one laid his head at the bosom of the other, immediately above him, at the banquet table. You recollect, that on the memorable night of the institution of the Lord's Supper, when our Saviour, at the head of the table, instituted the

sacrament, John, the disciple, was said to have leaned on his bosom—that is, he was next to him at the table; and according to the posture of the Jews in those days, rested on the bosom of Jesus Christ. So Lazarus, that was an outcast upon earth, and lay at the rich man's gate, who had nothing but the sweepings of the house for his support, depending altogether on the crumbs of charity—Lazarus is taken up—where? To the heaven of heavens, to the banquet of the skies; he is placed in the bosom of Abraham, and has fellowship with patriarchs and prophets—with the wisest, and the best, and the greatest, and the holiest creatures, gathered from the universe of God. There he is, feeding on heavenly manna, and living on angels' food, and drinking the river of life that floweth at the foot of the throne of God, and partaking of the immortal fruit that groweth evermore upon the tree of life, in the midst of the paradise of God.

Such is the adjustment of the case as it regards Lazarus. It is time, however, that we should come to the rich man; for he also died. We are not told how. It might have been in midnight riot and revelry, with stormy appetites, and the reins thrown loose upon his passions. But he had a funeral. I would just stop, for one single moment, to remark here, how exceedingly affecting must be the death of an exceedingly rich unconverted man. I say nothing of the gloom of death—of its violence to nature—of its disruption of all our ties; but I speak merely of this—that in one moment

the rich ungodly man loses all, and he travels on, naked and trembling, into the abyss of eternity, an accountable spirit, and is brought immediately before the awful tribunal of God!

"The rich man died, and was buried." His body was washed with pure water; and as it had been clothed in purple in life, so now it was wrapped in fine linen when it is dead; it is embalmed with Arabian spices and odoriferous drugs. A train of mourners fill the house—a tone of sadness and grief is thrown over the dwelling—tears are shed upon the coffin—every honorable virtue and amiable excellence is attributed to him—the procession moves off to the cemetery of his fathers. Some relative or other pronounces aloud his titles, and utters his eulogium; and as the coffin is lowering into the receptacle, "Peace be to his ashes, and let them spring on the grass, and grow as the lily by the water-courses!" is responded from the lips of the mourners: for the Jews, remember, believed in the resurrection of the dead; at least, as far as regarded the seed of Abraham—"Peace be to his ashes!" I wish there was nothing but peace; "but there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked," living or dead. How often is it said over the housed dust of an ungodly man, who has lived and died in impenitence, ungodliness, and unbelief, "We commit it to the ground, in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life;" when surely it would be better—I don't mean for the dead, for with them the case cannot be changed, but I mean for the living—if, as the grave closes

its mouth, a voice was heard issuing from the coffin, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved! the day of repentance is over and gone; and I am lost, lost forever!"—The rich man died and was buried. What became of his soul! The souls of the dead found a partial liberty on the verge or skirts of the atmosphere of this our globe, and were sometimes flitting in the storm, was the theology of our Pagan ancestors, the theology of the poems of Ossian, and of the day-dreams of those on whom the light of revelation has never dawned. We know what becomes of the soul of man immediately it leaves the body. In the instance of the good man, we see, from the case of Lazarus, that it goes to Abraham's bosom; and in the instance of the bad man it goes to hell. "In hell he lifted up his eyes." O, what a transition from a mansion of splendor, a saloon of beauty, the sound of music and the dance, to the groans of damnation and the thrills of despair! What must be the woe and the torments that fasten upon the man that has lived in disobedience, when, in a moment, he is plunged into the place where hope never comes? Don't tell me of poverty, and bankruptcy, and ruin. This is bankruptcy, this is more than bankruptcy and ruin in this world, a thousand and a thousand times over. To go from time to eternity, and carry nothing there but one's sins—to go hence into the mighty abyss, having no friend within the vail, and no home in heaven, and no asylum in eternity, and no place but the place where we are told the rich man went! "He lifted

up his eyes, being in torment, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." This leads me to state,

*Thirdly*, The next general observation, namely, THE EVERLASTING SEPARATION THAT TAKES PLACE AT DEATH BETWEEN THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED. You know how it is at present—the tares and the wheat grow together, the sheep and the goats mingle together; but at death the one is separated from the other so completely, that in the congregation of the righteous is not found one wicked man, and in the congregation of the wicked is not found one righteous man. Sometimes as you pass along the street you see a man you think you don't like—there is something in his countenance which distresses you—you fancy you see the blasphemer, the man reprobate to every good work, the man steeped in all corruption; and if one were to whisper in your ear that you must live a month with that man, and never be out of his society one day, you would be afflicted; but if you were told you must live in his fellowship a whole year and never be removed from the region of his pestiferous breath for a single moment or day in that year, what an affliction would it be! And if you were to spend a whole life-time, and never be separated from him a single instant, what a gloom would it spread over your mind! Hell is the place where there are many such—where all the inhabitants are such: "Without are dogs and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie,"—whatever is

abominable. O, tell me not of the fire and the worm, and the blackness and darkness of hell; to my terrified conscience there is hell enough in this representation of it—that it is the common sewer of all that is abominable, and abandoned, and reckless as to principle, and depraved as to morals; the one common eddy, where every thing that is polluted, and wretched, and filthy, is gathered together! There was the rich man—"In hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments!"

"In hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." With the rich man there is no change now; but from gulf to gulf, from blackness to blackness, from woe to woe, through one interminable series; and as to Lazarus, we find him in the heaven of heavens, in the bosom of Abraham, and he knows no change there except from song to song, from rapture to rapture, from thrill to thrill, and from one burst of joy and felicity to another.

The righteous and the wicked are separated at death; and it is this view of death that stamps it with so much solemnity; it is this which makes death so solemn an occurrence. "O, that men were wise, that they understood this; that they would consider their latter end." "He saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom, and he cried, and said, Father Abraham, have mercy upon me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water to cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son,

remember, that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted and thou art tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed"—no intercommunicating between the one and the other; the wicked are away from the company of the righteous, and the righteous are far, far away from the annoyance of the wicked —"besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us that would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee, therefore father, that thou wouldst send him to my father's house, for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment." But this leads me to the

Fourth general observation, namely: THE VIEW THAT IS TAKEN OF THIS LIFE BY MEN WHEN ONCE THEY GET OUT INTO THE FUTURE. I need not detain you with the first application of this lost man regarding himself. He prayed for a drop of cold water. What did he pray for? He does not pray for pardon, he does not pray for holiness, he does not pray for salvation, because he had never prayed for them in life. Death makes no essential change upon the qualities of the soul. Be it remembered that you are building up your characters as for an everlasting destiny and condition; and as you build up your characters in time, it will be with you throughout an unchanging eternity; so that if in life and time you do not seek after pardon,

and holiness, and salvation, you will never seek after them at all. This man, therefore, asks for relief from positive misery: "Send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame." But that drop of water is denied.

It is not this idea, however, that we have time now to dwell upon; it is rather the request that he subjoined to the refusal of the first, that we would call your attention. "Then," he said, "I pray thee, therefore, father, that thou wouldst send him to my father's house; for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment." What! did he pity his brethren? Had he any real sympathy for them? And is there any compassion in the bottomless pit, and is there mercy in the souls of the damned in hell? I am afraid that we must dismiss the thought altogether. The teaching and the revelation of God on the subject does not allow of our tolerating such an idea for a moment. "But then," you say, "does not the man ask that his brethren may be converted?" Unquestionably he does. Does he not ask that some extraordinary means might be had recourse to in order to bring them to repentance? Unquestionably he does so. But what is the ground on which he founds the petition and pity for them, but pity for himself? He knew very well that, though he was thus tormented in the flames of the bottomless pit without them, if they came to hell he would be more sorely tormented; their arrival there would form an era in

the history of his damnation; and fierce and biting as were the flames in their absence, they would be more fierce and biting in their presence.

We know that he had led them on in the ways of iniquity—that he had set them an example of vice and folly—and that, therefore, they would criminate and abuse him if brought into fellowship with him hereafter. And let us stop for a moment, and think, that perhaps, there are at this instant some persons in hell that are trembling at the thought of our going there—some whose morals we have corrupted—some whose spiritual history and well-being we have done irreparable damage to, whom we have blasted as with a mildew, and who have died with their sins upon their heads, unrepented of, unpardoned. O, my fellow-sinner, keep out of hell for their sake as well as for your own! O how affecting it is to the regenerated man to look back on the days of his unregeneracy, and to think how many he has damaged in their moral condition! Some of us may have been verily guilty in this matter, and we ought now, therefore, to strive to be the instruments of the salvation of those around us, since we have been instrumental, in some sort, in the damnation of some. "I pray thee, therefore, father, that thou wouldst send him to my father's house; for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment."

The last thing that we shall subjoin regards the SUFFICIENCY OF THE REVELATION THAT GOD HAS GIVEN TO CONFIRM ALL THESE THINGS. "Abraham

saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, Father Abraham"—"I had Moses and the prophets: those means were within my reach, but I perished. I turned a deaf ear to the voice of Moses and the prophets, and they may do so: therefore, I pray thee, let Lazarus go." Then, said Abraham, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." If they hear not Moses and the prophets, their case is hopeless; if the means with which they are favored shall be disregarded by them, no other means will be made effectual; "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded" to repent—for that is the scope of the passage—"though one rose from the dead." This is a very common opinion of many men in our day. There are persons who are proof against all the ordinary means of religion; and they lay the flattering unction to their souls, that if some one were to come back to them from the dead, with whom they were intimate during their life, they would then be impressed and converted.

Suppose, then, such a case: suppose some one from the invisible world, with whom we have been exceedingly intimate before his departure out of this world, were to appear in the center of this chapel, eye to eye, and front to front, what would be the effect? You would be frightened, but not converted—panic-struck, but not regenerated—alarmed and terrified, but not renewed and saved; and, if there was any effect produced by such an

appearance, it would be found in your nerves and muscles possibly, but it would not be found in your moral condition. You would be morally the same worldly, sin-loving, Christ disregarding individual that you now are; for, if ye hear not Moses and the prophets, Christ and the apostles, neither would ye be persuaded to repent though one rose from the dead. And if there is an individual listening to me this evening, having long sat under the sound of the Gospel in this place or elsewhere, who has been proof against all its facts, and arguments, and teachings, and warnings, and appeals, it is a most awful and monitory conclusion that we must come to—you are far gone in hopeless apostasy. If ever you are saved at all, it will be by the things that are in the Bible—the truths contained in Moses and the prophets, Christ and the apostles; and if you have heard the things—if they have met your attention again and again—if they have been pressed on your individual reception again and again, and you remain the same guilty and polluted person, we call upon you to take the alarm—if your souls are not softened in these means they will be hardened into a closer texture, and into still more obdurate resistance—if ye hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will ye be persuaded though one rose from the dead.

As to the arguments we have for the divinity of the Bible, as the revelation from God, we shall not this evening dwell upon them. These arguments are positive and cumulating—growing, amassing together every hour: and I need not enumerate them

to you now. We take it for granted that you allow the Bible to be the Gospel from heaven; and then we call upon you to listen to its message and accept it.

Let me now draw a few general reflections from the whole. First, then, we see that the ground of his infidelity is completely swept away from the feet of the skeptic, touching the present inequality of the distribution of the gifts of Providence among men. See where Lazarus is now, and ask yourselves, was there any thing unrighteous in the behavior of God toward him? Looking at the end from the beginning, every part of God's administration toward us will appear just, and right, and plain.

Then you will remark, that the poor man did not, when he died, go to Abraham's bosom because he was poor. There are some persons that flatter themselves that, because they are poor in this world, they will get to heaven at last; but poverty and wickedness are often found together. And Lazarus was admitted to Abraham's bosom because, although poor, he was rich toward God—rich in faith and grace; for without holiness no man shall see God, whether rich or poor.

Neither did the rich man go to hell because he was rich—he says he did not; he says that he had a day of grace and opportunity but slighted it. Riches may be a great blessing—the man himself may be infinitely the better for them, as well as many others deriving influence from him.

Lastly, we see no necessity for us to indulge the

conclusion so often entertained, touching the rich man; namely, that he was exceedingly avaricious, and altogether uncharitable and cruel to Lazarus. Lazarus lay at his gate—why did he lay there? Surely he must have received the charity of the house. It seems that the gate of the rich man's house was the home of Lazarus, and he would not surely have continued there if he had always been denied the bread of charity. Besides, why should the rich man ask, when he saw Abraham afar off, that he should send Lazarus that he might testify unto his brethren, if it does not involve the supposition that Lazarus had had his crumbs of bread? It seems to me to lie on the surface of the parable, that the rich man had been charitable to Lazarus in his life-time. It is not necessary to suppose that he was a man of cruelty and avarice. We do not need a parable of this length and construction to teach us that a rich man, a miserly, avaricious, cruel, selfish man, living and dying such, must, on his leaving this world, go to hell. That would take off the edge of the parable. Its clear design and tendency is to teach us, that if we despise the means of grace with which God has favored us, if we neglect his great salvation, we cannot escape; we must perish! May God bless his word!

# XV.

## THE TIME OF LIGHT.

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: but it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light."—ZECHARIAH xiv, 6, 7.

WE may address ourselves and our faculties to the understanding of the predictions of the Bible, but we must recollect that we are imperfect and fallible, and that much is hidden from us concerning the future; and though fancy may pursue her inquiries into the region of speculation, and imagination may light up a fire which is in reality dark, we are to be sober-minded in our interpretation of Scripture. Yet no part of Scripture is uninteresting or wholly unintelligible. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," and is always instructive. We are as much interested in these things as those who shall stand at "the end,"—the days when all obscurities will be taken off from the most prophetical portion of inspiration.

I have read to you a passage which I do not pretend that I fully understand: there may be meaning in it which may not be obvious to our perceptions; but I think I may take it as an explanation of the three following things: First, as descriptive of the present mingled state of affairs, both in the Church and in the world: "It shall come to pass

in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark—not day, nor night"—but a sort of twilight. Secondly, the text is descriptive of the superintending care of divine Providence during this checkered and mysterious state of things: though the light be neither day nor night, but a sort of twilight, it is "one day known to the Lord." Thirdly, the language before us is strikingly descriptive of the wonders and glories of that auspicious day in which this mingled state of affairs shall terminate. But, says the Prophet, "it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: but it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light." May the Lord of life and light now enlighten us!

First, the language of the text is DESCRIPTIVE OF THE PRESENT MINGLED STATE OF AFFAIRS—both in the Church and in the world: "it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark—not day, nor night"—but a sort of twilight. Darkness is the effect of our low situation; just as in a winter's day, sometimes, when the clouds hang so low, and the fogs are so thick, and the mists are so dense, we cannot see the light of the sun, its rays are turned from us, and refracted from us more than usual; but if we could get above the clouds, and soar aloft—if we could rise above these thick masses of clouds, these marshy evaporations, these foggy mists, all would be bright and clear. There is nothing really dark with God—nothing imperfect in the Gospel. The Gospel is

to our perception not so distinct as to be perfectly clear; but, thank God! it is not so dark as to be useless and unintelligible. There are clouds and obscurities resting on the subject arising from our weakness and imperfection of understanding.

I illustrate this, first, *By the partial distribution of the Gospel among the nations of the earth.* On that account the light is neither clear nor dark, neither day nor night, but a sort of twilight. Blessed indeed are *your* eyes, for they see; and *your* ears, for they hear. England has been very well held to be, without a figure of speech, the land of light, the land of vision, whence the rays of the luminous Gospel diverge to distant lands. But though we are a people that know the joyful sound, and therefore are blessed, God has not so dealt with the heathen nations; and as for his statutes, they have not known them. Pass over your own threshold, and what do you meet with? Pass the boundary of your own land, and what accosts you? There are not only some few countries, but there are many lands quite in the dark; there are large portions of whole continents in the dark—the Burmese, the Persian, the Syrian, the Chinese empires—and many others, inclosing the largest amount of the human population, and the fairest portion of the terraqueous globe—all in the dark. When we come to any thing like a strict summary of the case, there are only two or three hundred millions of the inhabitants of the earth who are acquainted with Christianity at all, in any form. When we come to analyze this portion of two or three hundred

thousand, and dissect out of that great mass of human beings which clothe the globe, how many of them are Christians by compulsion? How many are Christians by education? How many are Christians merely in form and for fashion? In the eye of the true God—that God who searcheth the heart and trieth the reins—how few, comparatively, is the number of real genuine Christians! We call the year in which we live the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and thirty-seven: is it not affecting to think that still the largest portion of the earth is still without the Gospel of our Lord! The damp, and dark, and murky fogs of error and delusion are placing themselves in the way of the bright flood of light; the darkness obstructs the light; for a time the collision is fierce, but the light is destined to prevail, and the darkness must flee away. May God hasten the time! At present, however, it is neither clear nor dark, neither day nor night; it is at the very best but twilight with this planet on which we dwell.

Secondly, The language before is also descriptive of *the imperfect attainments of real Christians.* How many of you have been for twenty or thirty years at the feet of the Prophet of the New Testament Church, while he has been instructing you out of his law? And yet when you analyze your Christian experience, and explore your moral character, and go down into the depths of your motives and dispositions, you find that in the matter of individual, personal, Christian experience, it is but twilight—it is not quite light. You have

*faith*, but how few have any thing like "the *full assurance* of faith!" You have *hope*, but how few of you have hope *ever-blooming!* You have *obedience*, but your obedience is but partial, irregular, imperfect. You have *joy*, but it is "meddled with." You are like the children of Israel, who sometimes seemed to make such progress in their journey that they were on the very borders of the promised land, and then they were sent back again "by the way of the Red Sea." How many Christians have to acknowledge, in the language of the patriarch of Uz, "I am of yesterday, and know nothing."

Thirdly, The text finds its illustration in *the inscrutable dispensations of the providence of God.* In that respect the light at present is "neither clear nor dark, neither day nor night." The providence of God—how vast, how profound a subject! Look at futurity, sealed with seven seals: we are forbidden even conjecture concerning it. God has his way in yonder whirlwind, his footsteps are past finding out. How many are the afflictions even of the righteous! They find that joy and sorrow, plenty and scarcity, sickness and health, spring, and summer, and winter, form the sad variety of their lot. How many are the providences of God toward his people which now they can neither understand nor explain! How was it with Jacob when Joseph's coat was brought to him, torn and bloody, and was lifted up before him? He shook his hoary head—the tear gathered in his eye and rolled down his face, and he exclaimed, "All these

things are against me!" He understood not; the dispensation was not clear; it was not quite daylight; there was a mist on the affair, there was a fog on the occurrence; the day was neither clear nor dark. So it is with many of the dispensations of Providence now: some of the links of the great chain have been brightened, others are incrusted, shrouded; but one after another the links all become bright; one purpose of God unfolds and unvails itself after another; but often there is much obscurity and unintelligibleness; it is neither clear nor dark, neither day nor night.

This first part of the subject will be relieved by the second: and that is, THE SUPERINTENDING CARE OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE during this checkered and mysterious state of things. "But," says the prophet, "it shall be one day known to the Lord."

This intimates to us, first, *God's superintendence of all things.* He makes the light, and he makes the darkness; he controls the light, and he controls the darkness; and what is still more, both the darkness and the light are the instruments of accomplishing his purposes and forwarding his interests. What the world calls *chance* we call *providence;* what the world calls *accident* we call *design.* Providence shrouds itself indeed behind the screen-work of secondary agencies; our eyes rest on the visible agency, but the invisible providence that is behind the screen-work we often disregard. God has an eye that sees all things; he has an arm that reaches from heaven to earth: he rules among the hosts of heaven, and overrules the councils

and conspiracies of hell. That man is culpable who says, "My God reigneth," if he suffers his distresses to be deep and lasting. "The Lord liveth; and blessed be my rock, and let the God of my salvation be exalted."

Secondly, This language intimates to us *God's foreknowledge of all things.* The prophet Isaiah has expressed this in most beautiful language in his prophecies, where Jehovah says, by him, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the fields shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." Our sight is limited by circumstances; God's eye pierceth the universe. Our eye is upon the evil; his is upon the good that is to come out of it. We know not what a day may

bring forth; he sees the end from the beginning: he comprehends past, present, and future in one eternal now. The immutability of God is the ground of our confidence: God is of one mind; none can turn him at all. Dr. Watts was philosophical as well as devotional; he was too good a divine, too profound a divine, to say, "God's eternal *thoughts;*" he says, "his eternal *thought*—

"His eternal thought moves all."

He knows every thing—he sees the end from the beginning.

Thirdly, The language intimates *the harmony of Divine Providence:* "It shall be one day known to the Lord." A day, you know, is made up of hours: each hour is crowded with minutes; each minute is saturated with seconds. Every day is pregnant with great events to individuals, to families, and to nations; every hour is fraught with occurrences, and every minute embraces important circumstances. But all these seconds included in a minute, and all these minutes crowded into an hour, and all these hours gathered together, form but one day. How many days—reckoning after the manner of men—how many *years* have been employed in the fulfillment of some one promise of God, in the ripening of some one event, in the maturing of some one dispensation? Thus there were some hundreds of years before he fulfilled his promise to Abraham that his seed should inherit the land of Canaan. Seventy years passed over before the return of the Jews from their

captivity in Babylon. Four thousand years were employed in the maturing of things for the birth of our Saviour. But four hundred years, and seventy years, and four thousand years, are to the eye of the omniscient God but one day. "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

It shall be "known to the Lord." Perhaps you may be ready to say, "Why do you discourse about the *harmony* of Providence; did you not intimate that there was conflict in the world and in the heart of every individual Christian? Where is the harmony of which you speak? All we see seems confusion." These objections are not the result of sagacity, but folly; they are not the product of intelligence, but short-sightedness; they are the effect, not of a clear and long-sighted wisdom, but of narrow and confined contemplation. We may look on a piece of machinery, and be pleased with its movements: the mere looker-on may not see the union of its complicated parts, may not understand the intention of the whole, may not discover the principle that originates the movements of the wheels; but what is confusion to him is harmony to the engineer; what is discord to him is symmetry to the proprietor; what is chaos to him is perfection and beauty to the constructor.

There is an image which is given to us in the Bible, which represents Providence as a wheel, a great wheel, in which are manifold smaller wheels, and all the wheels are full of eyes, and all the eyes

are instinct with intelligence; but it is only a small segment of the wheel that we see. We may see some of the smaller wheels which are inserted in the great wheel; but the revolutions of the great wheel are so high, and are determined by such profound intelligence, that we are often obliged to sit down and acknowledge our ignorance, and to fall at the feet of the great Teacher of wisdom, as David did, and to say, "What I know not teach thou me."

The language before us intimates *the beneficial tendency of the Providence of God.* The *day* is often employed in Scripture as the emblem of good —*darkness* is the emblem of evil. The *night* is the emblem of that which is calamitous—the *day* is the emblem of that which is benign. "It shall be one day known unto the Lord." It was a sense of the destitution of his condition that was of so much use to the prodigal; but never till then did he say, "I will arise and go to my father." Manasseh was more indebted to his captivity for his repentance than to his crown or a scepter. We are afflicted, not for God's pleasure, but for our profit, "that we might be partakers of his holiness." There are thousands on earth at this moment, and millions in heaven at this moment, who are saying, who are ready to say, who will say as soon as they have an opportunity of saying, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." The blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church. It is "one day known to the Lord."

The language before us is *a ground of unlimited*

*resignation and contentment.* Can our affairs be lodged in better hands? Can I secure a wiser administration of them? May I not repose with confidence on the superintending care of Almighty God? Are not those perfections that are competent to steer the vessel of the universe quite adequate to the management of my little bark, however tempestuous the wind, however troubled may be the water?

This view of Providence supplies *a motive for unlimited confidence.* I know I am a mortal; I know I am a dying creature, that I must meet the almighty messenger, and may have to meet him soon. Then what shall I do when I meet him? What shall I do in the last solemn struggle when thus the messenger comes to me? Whither shall I betake myself? "The Lord liveth; the Lord reigneth; the Lord is my shepherd: yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me." When my heart-strings are breaking—when my eyes are looking for the last time on my family—when I feel I am separating from earth and time, I will fall back on the declarations of Scripture; I will commit myself to that Providence whose eyes sleep not, whose eyelids slumber not. It is "one day known to the Lord."

Thirdly, I go on in the last view of the subject, to consider the view which is given us of THE WONDERS AND GLORIES OF THAT AUSPICIOUS DAY IN WHICH THE SINGULAR STATE OF AFFAIRS SHALL TERMINATE. Twilight shall not always last; twi-

light is not an abiding condition; twilight is a transition state; the transition shall be past, and "it shall come to pass that at evening time," when light is usually withdrawn—"at evening time," contrary to all the laws of nature—"at evening time it shall be light." "At evening time," when, after a long, cloudy, tempestuous, stormy day, nothing is expected but a gloomy and howling night—"it shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light." This promise contains, in the first place, *a reserve of consolation for the feeble Christian against the hour of dissolution.* Life is compared to a day of which infancy is the dawn, youth is the morning, manhood is the meridian, and old age is the evening. Now says the text, "It shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light." All men have not a dawn, a forenoon, a meridian, an afternoon, and an evening; but all have an evening; and to the Christian "it shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light." See the Christian surrounded by doubts and fears as to the close of life, harassed and perplexed with alarm in his mind as to what shall become of him. How well John Bunyan has hit it off in the "Pilgrim's Progress," in the character of Fearing—the man who had no fear except one, and that was that he should come short at last. And yet how is it with John Bunyan's Fearing—the man who had such a tender conscience, but was ever and anon haunted with the fear that he should be fearful in his last moment? O how Fearing got over the river Jordan! How he swam across, and met

the shining ones at the other side! "At evening time it was light." See a feeble Christian die: a mortal paleness is on his cheek, but a calm composure is there too: death is there, but Christ is there too; death has come in at the window, the destroyer is there; but the Conqueror is there as well as the destroyer; death is there as the servant—Christ as the Master. The children of the dying man surround his couch; he fancies he sees them in a thousand interesting situations in which they will need his counsel, his influence, his example, his assistance, and for a moment he feels keenly: but he hears a voice coming sweeter than the music of the spheres—"Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me;" and he is relieved from a heavy load. For a moment he is alarmed at the recollection that he is about to stand a disembodied spirit before the tribunal of his Maker; but he remembers that he is not to stand there in his own name, but that he is to stand there justified through the righteousness of Christ—that he is to stand there in relationship to the Judge on the throne—that that Saviour-Judge is his elder brother; and his fears are relieved, his anxieties are removed: he has the feeling which is expressed in the beautiful language of the psalmist, which we have already quoted—"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me,"—thy rod is with me to beat off the enemy, thy staff is with me that I may recline

upon it, that I may repose upon it: and so he gets safe through the valley. For, somehow or other, dark as the valley is, gloomy as is the defile, there seems a sort of opening at the end of the valley, and a flood of light comes rippling o'er the darkness. It is just this: Christ went through the valley before him; Christ broke an opening through at the other end; and he has left a fissure in the rock, a chasm in the valley, and the light of heaven has been flowing in ever since. To the Christian "at evening tide it shall be light."

Secondly, This part of the language of the text contains in it *a reserve of consolation for the feeble Christian in seasons of perplexity and difficulty.* We employ the term *darkness* to intimate great mental disquietude: we employ the term *light* to figure out seasons of relief from some terrible catastrophe. Christians are allowed sometimes to be involved in difficult circumstances; sometimes they are in the situation of the children of Israel when the army of Pharoah was pursuing behind them, and the Red Sea was rolling before them, and the inaccessible summits of Baal-zephon were on the right hand and on the left: there they were, the sea before them—Pharaoh and his army behind them, Baal-zephon's cliffs on the right and the left: and what were they to do? "At evening time it was light." When it seemed as though they must either feed the sword of Pharaoh, or fill up the chasms of the Red Sea, then it was that a way was made for the ransomed of the Lord; and the laws of gravitation were suspended, and

the water divided hither and thither; the sides of the water formed a solid wall, and the children of Israel passed over dry shod. "At evening time it was light." Talk to Christians forty, fifty, or sixty years of age; turn over a few leaves of your own history, and see if you cannot put your finger on some momentous period of your own history, when, in this sense, at evening time it has been light. See Hagar in the wilderness, turned away from the house of Abraham: there she is with her infant son; she lays him down; there was no water, and the child was dying with thirst. Unable to endure the sight of the convulsions of the dying child, the mother turned her face away; and the moment she did so, in that awful moment, "at evening time it was light:" the voice came and said, "Hagar, Hagar, the child is not to die, but to live:" and she looked, and there was a well of water: and she and her son lived.

Thus—not to travel out of the limits of that family—look at Abraham and Isaac. See Abraham take his only son by Sarah, rising from the side of Sarah in the morning, taking the young men, and his son, with the fire, and the knife, and the wood: they ascend the distant ridge of hills, and after three days' suspense Abraham arrived at the mountain; he there built an altar, he laid the wood in order, and then he took the knife; he lifted up his hand, and at that instant a voice pierced the air, an invisible arm arrested the hand of the patriarch, and the voice cried, saying, "Abraham, Abraham, lay not thine hand upon the lad."

O, that is a bold preacher, a very bold preacher, who would try to describe the agony of Abraham when he lifted up his hand to slay Isaac; but that is a bolder preacher far that would try to describe the rapture of Abraham when he took down his hand. "Lay not thine hand on the lad." "At evening time it was light."

Thirdly, and lastly, this promise seems to contain in it *an assurance of the final glory, the millennial reign of the Son of God.* "It shall be one day known to the Lord"—"not clear or dark, not day or night: but it shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light." Now the day here alluded to has been supposed to refer to the great day of the Gospel, the entire flux of time over which the Gospel extends, having a morning, afternoon, and evening time. Now the first part of this day began with the ministry of the apostles, and came down to the end of the third century. The second period began with the fourth century, and came down to the overthrow of antichrist. The third part of the period embraces the general diffusion of the Gospel, the universal triumphs of the cross; the latter-day glory, the resurrection of the dead, and the final judgment. "But," says the prophet, "it shall come to pass that at evening time"—in the latter part of the period signified by this day—"at evening time it shall be light."

My friends, we live in very remarkable times. I shall not endeavor to show you the peculiar feature by which their events are marked; but I may

say, that there is not an old man in the congregation, the most venerable in years present, who can put his finger on any portion of the times in which he has lived, or his father before him, and say they were as remarkable as the times in which we live. The times in which we live are luminous, and fulfill the promise of the final brightening intimated in the text. Some people have compared these times with the times of the *apostles*. That is not a fair comparison: the apostles wrought miracles; they healed the sick, and raised the dead, and thus carried conviction by their miracles. Miracles have now ceased: some people think they have come back again. I shall not take on myself to say whether they will come back again or not, but I say they have not yet, and for any thing I know they never will return. The triumphs of the Gospel are effected now without miracles: it is the pure Gospel, the blowing of the trumpet of the Gospel; it is the steeping of the human intellect in the ether of the light of the Gospel; it is the power of moral suasion which is effecting all the triumphs of the Gospel in our day.

Some have compared these times with the times of the *reformers*. God forbid that I should undervalue the labor of the reformers; they did nobly, magnanimously; but we cannot deny that there was a good deal of bigotry mixed with their doings. Some have compared these times with the times of *Whitefield* and *Wesley*. Those were remarkable times: the ministry of those men operated like a seven-fold peal of thunder in England,

Scotland, and America—like a seven-fold peal of thunder, that thrills, and echoes, and reverberates —the reverberations of which have not ceased yet, and I believe never will cease till the thunder of the archangel's trumpet is sounded. But there was then no Bible Society, no Missionary Society, no Sunday-School Society; things were not ripe enough for these grand efforts to attack the darkness, and set up agencies by which light may be diffused all round the globe. We live in a day when it is attempted to diffuse the light of the Gospel among our neighbors and fellow-countrymen, and all over the earth.

"It shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light." The millennial light has not yet shined clear; it is not light; but there are the faint streaks that announce the morning—the flittering gray streaks that purple the horizon. It is like the dawn in the eastern part of the world, which the Easterns call the false dawn. There are two dawns in the east—we have only one; there is the false dawn and the true dawn; but the false dawn goes before the true dawn—the true dawn follows after. Some have supposed that thirty years ago we were arriving at the millennial dawn. I pronounce not whether it has begun or not, but we are on the eve of great moral revolutions, in the issue of which it will be found that light is every-where, and darkness nowhere—truth every-where, and falsehood nowhere—love every-where, hatred nowhere—kindness every-where, cruelty nowhere. I do not stop to say whether or not, in order to effect this, Jesus

Christ is to come down in person, and reign in person on the earth. Some imagine that he is; I do not think it is necessary to secure the fulfillment of the text. The heavens retain him, and will retain him till the times of the restitution of all things. I think when the Bible shall be translated into every language, and every man, woman, and child shall have a copy of it—when the Gospel shall be preached in its simplicity in every part of the habitable earth—when the worship of God shall be set up in every nation and tribe—when all idolatry shall have melted away, and all the false heresies dissolved—then I think the text will receive its fulfillment. May God Almighty hasten the coming of this light!

In closing the subject let me ask, How are we affected by all this? Whereabouts are we in all this grand scene? Are we in the dark or in the light? Blessed—I said at the beginning—blessed are your eyes, for they see: *do* you see? Do you hear the voice of the Son of God? The hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth. There are two voices we have to hear: the one is the silver trumpet of the Gospel, the other is the clarion trumpet of the final judgment. You must hear the last whether you will or not; you may hear the first; you may hear it and live; you may so hear it that its tones shall be music in your ears, and life, and health, and peace. Let none of us be satisfied with the fact that we are living in a Christian country, and attending on Christian assem-

blies for worship: how goes the matter with yourselves individually? Have you the root of the matter? Has your darkness been turned into light? Have you passed from death unto life? Examine yourselves whether ye be of the faith or not. "Know ye not that Christ" (nothing but this will do) "that Christ is in you except ye be reprobates?" May God bless his word, and crown it with success, for his name's sake! Amen.

THE END.

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